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JULY 1919.

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BLACKWOOD'S MAGAZINE.

PUBLISHED MONTHLY.

NEW YORK:
THE LEONARD SCOTT PUBLICATION CO.,
HARR FERRER, PROP.
249 WEST 13TH STREET.

WILLIAM BLACKWOOD AND SONS, EDINBURGH.

Entered at the New York Post-Office as second-class matter.
Entered as second-class matter, July 3, 1917, at the post office at New York, N. Y., under

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BLACKWOOD'S MAGAZINE.

No. MCCXLV. JULY 1919. Vol. CCVI.

THE PASSING OF OLD FEZ.

BY MAJOR A. J. A. DOUGLAS.

One of the effects of the Great War has been the arresting of Colonial development: the call for men, the lack of transport, and the general dislocation of ordinary life has necessitated the abandonment of many enterprises all over the world. To this the French zone in Morocco has been a marked exception.

When war broke out in August 1914 it found France the recognised protector of practically the whole country except for a narrow strip along the Mediterranean nominally administered by Spain, and the very limited international zone round Tangier. The old and corrupt system of government had already passed away, although to outward seeming the country was, and still is, ruled in the same manner. The Sultan, Mulay Youssef, elected on 13th August 1912, in succession to his brother Mulay Hafid, was firmly established on the throne as an absolute autocrat, and issued his dahirs in the time-honoured way through his grand vizier. In reality his powers are practically nil—everything is subject to the approval of the Commissaire Resident, General Lyautey, who, appointed by the French Government in April 1912, is the real ruler and directing spirit of the Maghreb.

The Republic is to be congratulated on her choice; in the person of General Lyautey she possesses not only a great colonial soldier, but an administrator of quite exceptional capabilities; it is doubtful whether any other man could have controlled the situation in such a masterly fashion as he has done since the beginning of the Great War.

France, with her very ex-

istence at stake, and with the German hordes advancing on her capital, had need of all her sons, and immediate and heavy demands had to be met by the new protectorate. Such troops as could be spared, both French and native, were immediately despatched, and, as it was imperative to replace them in some way, a certain number of territorials, men who on account of their age were considered unsuitable for active service in Europe, were sent out to Morocco. Fresh native units were formed and were drafted to France as occasion offered, and immense supplies of grain and other foodstuffs were shipped to the Mother Country. The keystone of General Lyautey's policy was to hold Morocco with the bare minimum of troops compatible with safety, at the same time sending the authorities at home every possible assistance: in this he has admirably succeeded. More than once has the Protectorate seemed threatened with disaster, especially in the spring of 1918, when coincident with the great German attack on the Western Front, German emissaries in Morocco, taking advantage of the asylum offered them in the Spanish zone, strained every nerve to raise the Berber tribes, and arrange a combined attack with the object of driving the French from the interior and even from the country. In this they signally failed owing to French vigilance and inter-tribal jealousy, which rendered united action practically impossible. Should they have succeeded, and a general rising taken place, no one can say what would have happened; but the consequences would certainly have been most serious. Faced with such a situation, it would have been natural to suppose that the Protectorate authorities would have been content to hold the fort and not to extend their activities, but the very reverse has been the case. To a man of General Lyautey's temperament, himself the very embodiment of energy, anything except progress was out of the question. In addition to the military operations, which were perhaps unavoidable, many new posts have been constructed along the borders of the unsubdued territory: these serve the double purpose of keeping the wild mountain tribesmen from raiding the more settled plain country, and of spreading French influence by political and other means, such as free medical assistance; for it must not be forgotten that the task of France in Morocco has been immensely complicated by reason of the fact that, even in the most prosperous days of the Moorish Empire, there has never been a sultan who was ruler of the whole country. To this day there are Berber tribes who have never acknowledged a conqueror, and have since the earliest ages preserved their independence. The victory of the Allies has now settled their fate, and before very long they will be forced to submit—but not until there

has been much hard fighting, for they are brave and warlike, and the difficult nature of the uplands they inhabit gives them a considerable advantage. In the more settled districts, such as the coast belt and the great plains of the interior, the progress made in the last four years has been extraordinary, and to those who were familiar with the old régime, the changes have been almost unbelievable.

A glance at the history of Morocco will show how for centuries the interior, in spite of its close proximity to Europe, has remained practically a *terra incognita;* the coast towns had long been familiar with the foreigner, but prior to the French Protectorate, which became an accomplished fact in 1912, the number of Europeans in the cities of the interior was very small, and their situation was at all times somewhat precarious. The Moors have always been a most conservative and exclusive race; highly fanatical, they regarded the Christian with intolerance and contempt, and delighted to humiliate him in every possible way.

It is interesting to note that up to the very last the special missions, sent to the Moorish Court from time to time by the various great powers, were received by the Sultan in such a way as to emphasise their inferiority in the eyes of the people. At Fez they were invariably received in a big open space near one of the principal gates. In full uniform the members of the mission had to stand ankle-deep in dust waiting in the blazing sun till it should please his Sherifian majesty to appear; for it was always so arranged that the actual meeting did not take place until some considerable time after the hour fixed for the ceremony. Eventually the potentate, amid fanfares, would enter the square through a gateway, riding a magnificent barb, surrounded by a numerous retinue, and protected from the sun's rays by a crimson velvet umbrella. Many an ambassador must have keenly felt the humiliation of his position as he stood bareheaded in the dust before the mounted autocrat. The writer vividly remembers how at Marrakesh in 1911, when there were less than twenty Europeans in the city, he was daily insulted in the streets, the passers-by spitting on his shadow and cursing him for a "Dog of a Christian." But this state of affairs has now passed away for ever. At Fez it was the rising in April 1912 which hastened events, and marked the beginning of a new era for the interior. It was only then that the proud Fassis, always troublesome and independent, and who for centuries had set up and deposed the Sultans at their pleasure, learnt for the first time the real power of the unbeliever. Infuriated by the massacre of many of their compatriots, the French soldiers exacted a stern vengeance. Field artillery posted on the surrounding heights bombarded the positions held by the rebels,

while machine-guns from the roofs and mosque towers swept the streets. Many a building still shows the mark of this bombardment, and the lesson so learnt has never been forgotten. From this date the task of opening up the interior was begun. The old caravan tracks, many of them quite impassable in the rainy season, gave place to metalled roads, and in February 1915 a light military railway from Casablanca and Rabat reached first Meknes, and then Fez, 36 miles farther east. In place of a five or six days' ride on horseback or on mules, Fez could be reached from Rabat in a single day's journey, and a traveller, arriving at Casablanca in the morning by steamer, could take the train to Rabat the same afternoon and be in Fez at sunset on the following day. The result of this improvement in communications was immediate, and Fez, the most sacred city of North Africa, found her exclusiveness gone for all time.

Few of the strongholds of Islam can boast a more varied and romantic history. Fez was founded by Mulai Idrees II. in the year 808. This ruler, the second of the Idrees dynasty, being desirous of finding a suitable site for his capital, was attracted by the great natural advantages which Fez offers. Situated at the edge of the great Sais plain, which here falls abruptly to the valley of the Sebu; magnificently watered both by the Wad Fez, which rising out of the ground at Ras El Ma (the Head of the Waters), flows for about eight miles through the plain, and then rushes with considerable force down the slope towards the Sebu, and also by numerous springs of clear water; surrounded by luxuriant and beautiful gardens of orange, pomegranate, peach, almond, and other fruit trees, and dark-green groves of olive,—Fez offers almost every attraction possible to the Oriental mind. The praises of Fez have been sung by numerous native writers with extravagant epithets and many quaint phrases; but the fact remains that it is the most picturesque and interesting city in Morocco. For the first five hundred years after its foundation the city had a truly remarkable history, being besieged and taken as many as eight times. The founder, Mulai Idrees, was buried in the city beside a mosque which he erected; his tomb and mosque have become the most venerated sanctuaries in North Africa, and yearly attract many pilgrims; and this fact goes far to account for the well-known fanaticism of the inhabitants.

Old Fez for long consisted of two separate districts, the "Aduat el Andalus" and the "Aduat el Karuëein," situated on each side of the Wad Fez, the Andalus district being inhabited by people of Spanish extraction. These two districts were united in 1070, but the animosity which had always reigned between them died hard. In 1204 the town was completely walled in, and

seventy years later—*i.e.*, in 1274—the town of New Fez (Fez Jedeed) was built by Yakub II., one of the rulers of the Beni Marin dynasty, and since this date, except for the erection of various mosques, Fez has undergone no very extensive improvement.

Under the Beni Marin dynasty, which lasted until 1471, Fez gradually grew in importance and became renowned throughout the world as a centre of learning. To it flocked all the refugees from Spain, driven out by the conquering Christians. Medersas, or religious colleges, sprung up, and attracted students in large numbers, and the libraries were famous and extensive. Judged by modern standards this learning was not deep, but in those days it was considered wonderful; and the Fassis, proud, self-centred, and self-satisfied, considered their city as the hub of the universe.

In 1554, during a struggle between a branch of the Beni Marin and the Saadi Shareefs, Fez was occupied by the Turks on behalf of the Beni Marin; the occupation was, however, of short duration, and the city very soon fell to Mohammed X., the Saadi Ameer. This is the only occasion, prior to the French occupation, on which Fez has had to acknowledge a foreign master. By the middle of the sixteenth century the academic glories of Fez had passed away; most of the great libraries had been dispersed, scholars were few and indifferent, and the city could no longer be regarded as a centre of learning.

In 1648 the Fassis, tired of the Saadi dynasty and of the general misrule and disorder, invited another race of Shareefs (or descendants of the prophet) from Tafilelt to found a new dynasty. The change was easily accomplished, and the throne of Morocco has been held by this line ever since.

By the beginning of the eighteenth century Fez, from a centre of learning, refinement, and culture, had become a sink of every vice induced by the luxury of prosperity. Few of the old Medersas and colleges remained, and every art had fallen into decay. In 1873 the city was besieged and taken for the last time by the Sultan Mulai El Hassan, whom Old Fez had refused to acknowledge, although New Fez had opened its gates to him. From this date until the coming of the French the history of Fez is comparatively uneventful. Until the French occupation Fez remained most difficult of access for Europeans; the local authorities neither wanted nor welcomed them. Unless the European traveller had a friend in the city it was impossible to obtain a night's lodging, and the unfortunate Christian was perforce obliged to put up his tent in a big open space reserved for that purpose on ground covered with filth of every description, where the caravan animals were tethered, and where he was subjected to the stares of the curious and the insults of the fanatical

inhabitants. Everywhere the Christian was regarded with marked disfavour, and if he could understand the vernacular, his ears were all day long assailed by such expressions as "Dog of a Christian," "Allah confound the unbeliever," while every passer-by solemnly spat upon the ground to show his contempt.

Certain quarters of the city could not be entered at all, and all round the sanctuary of Mulai Idrees was a sacred area, into which no Christian could penetrate without risking his life. These forbidden areas were, as a rule, marked by wooden bars across the streets; but some were quite open, and unless the visitor was accompanied by a guide, he was almost sure to find himself in trouble. So strong was the feeling that, until the French control was firmly established by the events of 1912, no consulate was allowed to fly a flag.

The great convulsion in Europe during the last four years has affected Fez but little. Certain articles have been scarce, and there has undoubtedly been an all-round rise in prices; but there has been nothing approaching the scarcity which has been so marked elsewhere, and the French authorities have strained every nerve to keep up an adequate supply of such articles as sugar, candles, and cotton goods, all essential to the native mind, and the lack of which would have inevitably led to serious discontent and disorder. Taking it all round, it would be difficult to find any other country, the inhabitants of which had been less disturbed in their daily lives than the natives of Morocco. To the present writer, who arrived in Fez in May 1918, the change seemed tremendous. In contrast to the almost anguished existence at home, where every hour seemed fraught with pain and suffering, and anxiety showed on every countenance, life in Fez flowed smoothly on, each day like the last, another world in which the great conflict seemed remote and almost unreal; for to the true believer is not the present all sufficient, —the warm sun, the price of a meal, a garment to cover him, —why take thought for the morrow? for Allah will provide; are not all things ordained, so why struggle against the inevitable?

The journey to Fez from the coast can now be made either by train or by automotrice. The latter is a light car running on the railway track and propelled by a petrol engine which only takes one day, while the train, much slower and stopping at every siding, takes two. Most travellers prefer the automotrice; but only a very limited amount of baggage is allowed, and the remainder has to be sent by train.

It is impossible to tell on nearing Fez that one is approaching a great city: all that can be seen are the mosque towers of Fez Jedeed or New Fez; the old city is completely hidden by the fall of the ground. The station is

situated at Dar Dabibagh, where the new French town is already laid out, although so far few houses have actually been erected. Here there is an hotel, but most visitors prefer to drive either to the Mellah quarter in New Fez, or to the upper part of Old Fez, where there are several hotels under French management. This drive takes about twenty minutes, and the cab service is now wonderfully efficient, most of the drivers being Spaniards or Maltese. The less said about the hotels the better; they are neither clean nor comfortable, and there is a crying need for something more up-to-date if tourists are to be attracted in any numbers, which is what the authorities confidently look forward to in the future.

The contrast between Old and New Fez is very marked; the latter cosmopolitan to the last degree, the former in most respects the same as it has been for centuries. With the exception of two or three mosques, Fez Jedeed is quite devoid of any historical or architectural interest. The Mellah or Jewish quarter, which was almost completely destroyed and pillaged during the rising in 1912, teems with life of the most varied description. Here are the shops which cater for the European community, and the main street, or Grande Rue du Mellah, is filled with a jostling crowd of Jews, the men in their black jellabs and skull-caps, the women in velvets and bright silk head-dresses; other Jews in European dress, and Europeans themselves of various nationalities, French of course predominating, although there are now many Spaniards, chiefly employed on the various public works. The main street ends in the Grande Place de Commerce, a big open space where there are several cafés much frequented by the military and their somewhat doubtful female companions. Here there is a Cinema theatre nightly crowded by the Europeans and Jews, although many Moors are now regular patrons. Progress in this quarter is most marked; more and more of the Jews are adopting European dress, which from the artistic point of view is much to be deplored, and their own national costume, which in the old days was most rigorously preserved, is undergoing an alteration: formerly only black caps, slippers, and jellabs were allowed, but now red fezes, yellow slippers, and white jellabs are often to be seen. Many of the Jewish women are very handsome, but they soon lose their figure and become shapeless and ungainly.

The rest of Fez Jedeed is made up of a large quarter given over to the women of the town, and a maze of mean streets, many of the buildings being made of mud and wattle in the usual African style. Between Fez Jedeed and Old Fez there is a gap of about half a mile, mostly covered by gardens formerly belonging to the Sultan, but now converted into a public park. The main road between the two towns

is walled in and is the busiest thoroughfare in Fez, crowded with voitures and public charabancs carrying passengers of all descriptions; for the Moors gladly avail themselves of these modern conveniences. From New Fez the ground slopes gently down until the Bou Jeloud (Father of Skins) Gate is reached giving access to Old Fez. This gate, of comparatively modern construction, ornamented with coloured designs, and built with the usual Moorish horse-shoe arch, is the limit for wheeled traffic, and further progress can only be made by horse, mule, donkey, or on foot. The two streets of the Talaa quarter run down the slope, which now becomes very marked, towards the heart of the city. Both are crowded with a motley throng: a few Europeans, generally soldiers or officers in uniform, the rest Fassis, dressed for the most part in plain white, dark-blue, or brown; and country folk from the surrounding districts come to sell their produce, and to buy such luxuries as tea, sugar, and candles. These country folk can easily be distinguished from the Fassis; burnt by the sun, wiry and muscular, the women unveiled and loaded with barbaric ornaments, they form, with their open and independent look, a marked contrast to the pale citizens, who wear by comparison a somewhat furtive appearance, and preserve an air of detachment and aloofness. This difference is more noticeable between the women than the men, for the Fez woman always goes heavily veiled, only the eyes showing, everything else being swathed in voluminous white draperies.

On each side of these streets are shops or booths: there piles of vegetables fresh from the country, masses of cabbages, carrots, onions, splendid red radishes, and turnips; there yellow mounds of native butter, great pyramids of chocolate-coloured and locally manufactured soap, blue-wrapped pylons of sugar, large basins of dried peas, walnuts, raisins, and olives; next door perhaps rolls of cotton of British manufacture, together with bright-coloured and embroidered cloths of native make; again a tinsmith (generally a Jew) hammering busily and noisily and surrounded by many household derelicts sent to him for repair; and yet again a charcoal-seller, before whose booth a crowd surges jostling and shouting to obtain the precious commodity, for charcoal is scarce these days and the charcoal-burners are difficult and independent and often withhold supplies. In short, a varied scene of never-ceasing interest. Near the top of the main Talaa is the Bouanania, the finest and largest Medersa in Fez. Just before reaching the door, and on the opposite side as one descends the street, there is an old water-clock consisting of thirteen large bronze bowls resting on carved wooden supports, the whole in a state of decay. It is difficult to learn its history and how the clock worked, but the story goes that it was finally put out of order

by a Jew whose wife, an expectant mother, had been frightened by the striking of the hour. The main door of the Bouanania is of wood covered with brass ornamented with geometrical designs. This is a Medersa mosque, and Europeans cannot enter without authority. The interior consists of a large tiled court surrounded by walls which have once been covered with ornamental plaster and richly carved cedar-wood. Windows of mushrabiyyeh work look out on to this court, giving light and air to the small rooms inhabited by the Tolba or students. There is a marble laver in the centre where the faithful wash their feet before prayer, and a tiled water-course in front of the sanctuary which faces the entrance. On the right and left are large rooms richly ornamented with incised plaster-work. The writer was privileged to enter the sanctuary, which was being restored under the supervision of the French director of Beaux Arts, M. Ricard. This gentleman has done admirable work in Fez, reviving all the old industries and stimulating the craftsmen to further energies. Two native carpenters were at work in the shrine, preparing rafters of cedar-wood to restore the roof, which is in a bad state of repair and anything but watertight. The scheme of the old roof is most intricate and beautiful, a maze of geometrical designs so cunningly blended that the eye can scarcely follow them. From the roof hang long chains with brass brackets supporting glass oil lamps. The pillars are of alabaster, showing Greek and Roman influence. Traces still remain of what must have been exquisite coloured ornamentation both on pillars and walls. Small windows of delicately traced design, filled in with glass of different tints and placed high up on the walls, throw patches of coloured light. When the work of restoration is completed no European will again be permitted to enter the shrine.

A remarkable feature of this Medersa is the fact that on the side of the court to the east, which is most exposed to the influence of the weather, the old carving and tile-work is almost completely destroyed, while on the more sheltered side the patterns can still be distinctly traced. The old wooden pulpit used for the Friday sermons is still preserved in another part of the Medersa: it is crumbling away, but sufficient remains to show that it must once have been carved with a delicacy hard to associate with the Moorish art of the present day. Before it was allowed to fall into such decay the building must have been extremely beautiful, and still remains a fine example of the Hispano-Mauresque style. The old court flooded with warm sunlight, filled with the cooing of pigeons, and with here and there the figure of a worshipper kneeling in prayer, forms a picture of quiet peace and beauty that it would be hard to beat.

To the right of the Talaa is a residential quarter inhabited by rich Moors and many Europeans. Here are situated the different Bureaux, the British Consulate, the residence of the General Commanding, and the Batha, now transformed into an officers' club, but formerly a palace built for the Sultan Abdul Aziz. The Batha is well worth a visit, for it contains many objects of interest. It consists of a large rectangular space, walled in and raised considerably above the level of the surrounding ground, and lying east and west. At the east end are the rooms devoted to the "Cercle des Officiers" round three sides of a tiled pavement where fountains splash and play: here the French military band performs twice a week during the summer months, and on a moonlight night the scene is charming. Beyond this there are two oblong strips of garden filled with flowers of every hue, and sunk about six feet below the level of the tiled walk which divides them. At the further or western end there is another paved space where, beside more fountains, the French have placed a number of old cannon and mortars, many of them gifts from European monarchs to the various Sultans. Opening off this space are rooms where are displayed the best examples of Old Fez art. In one room is the coloured pottery for which Fez is so famous: large plaques ornamented with designs in many colours, the patterns mostly geometrical, for according to Mohammedan law exact representation of plants and animals is forbidden; others in blue and white, many of them very beautiful: quaintly shaped water-jars and "jibbanas" or butter dishes with elegant covers and pleasing designs; long-necked bottles for oil, quaint and elaborate inkstands, and many other objects very effective at a distance, but, like all Moorish things, somewhat rough if examined too closely. In the same room are carved and painted shelves, and brackets of wood of most graceful shape, which show off the pottery to perfection. These old things are now most difficult to obtain, and are eagerly bought up for large prices if they come into the market. Another large room is filled with weapons: guns, pistols, daggers, powder-horns, and bullet pouches. The old long-barrelled Moorish guns, bound with bands of silver and often inlaid with gold and ivory, are beautiful objects, but are now very scarce. Opening off another and smaller courtyard are two more rooms; one is devoted to examples of Fez embroidery and brocade work: Haities, or wall hangings, of old Venetian and Genoese velvet heavily embroidered in gold; broad sashes, worn by the women, of silk brocade with prettily coloured patterns, each being so arranged that the wearer has the choice of four designs according to fancy; bridal veils with

gold and coloured stripes, and hangings of various sorts. The other room is filled with things of exclusively Berber origin. Large carpets woven in various colours, jellabs of black goat-hair with bright orange patches, much affected by the mountain tribes, and locally called "huneef," and rude pottery painted with black and red designs, consisting of plates, jars, and representations of cocks and tortoises, unglazed and altogether different from the Moorish productions. There is yet another room with examples of carving in wood and stone, and an immense and beautifully-shaped earthenware jar which was discovered deep under ground by some workmen who were digging the foundations for a new wall, and the origin of which it is impossible to tell.

The whole of this quarter of Fez is becoming more and more European. There is a great demand for houses, and rents in consequence are soaring to alarming proportions. Here is situated the hospital "Auvert," covering a large area, and notable as having been the French centre of resistance during the rebellion of 1912. Much good medical work is now being done, but the field is a very wide one and the need urgent; for among the chief things that strike the visitor to Fez are the manifold physical imperfections of the inhabitants. The whole of this residential quarter is light and airy compared with the lower parts of the city. Descending one of the narrow streets that run down the hill one finds oneself in a perfect labyrinth, another world, grey and sombre except where stray shafts of sunlight penetrate the gloom. The descent is steep, and walking, especially after rain, is none too easy. To the stranger the turns and twists of the streets are little short of bewildering. The house walls towering up to right and left present a grey and almost unbroken surface; any windows that there are are placed high up and heavily barred. The doors of the houses are of wood studded with great nails, and generally bound with strips of tin cut from old cans of petroleum. Almost every house in places overhangs the street—the overhang being supported by great balks of cedar-wood, black with age, and giving a characteristic and picturesque appearance. There is practically no outside decoration to these houses, and nothing to indicate the often beautiful interiors which one finds in the better-class houses of the Fassis. Here and there are public fountains, often beautifully tiled in various colours, with three or more jets discharging into an oblong trough. Almost everywhere can be heard the sound of water rushing down the hill through hidden pipes; for every house has its own water supply, and even the meanest boasts its fountain. There are two separate systems of water-pipes, one above the other—the higher for drinking and

washing, the lower for refuse. Large portions of the streets are completely covered in and resemble tunnels, the houses being built right across. Fez is a veritable paradise for an artist, and some of the vistas are very beautiful: here a glimpse of some old half-ruined mosque tower; there a bridge across the street where the houses meet, with quaint windows screened by mushrabiyyeh work, and festooned with giant cobwebs, which look as if they dated from the beginning of time. The attention of the pedestrian is fully taken up in avoiding the numerous horses, donkeys, and mules which pass and repass, leaving but little room on either side; the cry of "Balak," or "look out," is ever on the air, shouted now by a donkey-boy or grimy charcoal-seller, now by some slave running at the stirrup of a wealthy merchant or high official who, mounted on splendid mules, perched on high-peaked saddles of crimson cloth, and clad in flowing garments, present, with their often handsome and venerable features, pictures of true oriental dignity. Every here and there, debouching from the larger streets, are dark and narrow alleys, dim, mysterious, and gloomy, whence issue the shrouded forms of women who shuffle by with an air of secrecy and intrigue. There must be many such by-lanes, and in fact, whole quarters in Fez where Europeans seldom enter. The writer has a lively remembrance of being once lost in the lower city after sunset, and of wandering for what seemed hours up and down in almost pitch darkness through streets so narrow that a horse could just pass, vainly inquiring the way from the few pedestrians encountered, who either paid no heed to his request or merely said they did not know.

Frequently the European is greeted by the children with a pert "Bon jour" and a winning smile; for to these youngsters, unlike their parents, Christians have always been a familiar sight; but, on the faces of the old, one can often see that look of dislike and contempt characteristic of other days.

The objects of interest in the lower parts of the city are so many that it is impossible to describe them here. The Souks, or bazaars, fairly hum with activity, each quarter being devoted to the sale of a particular kind of merchandise: such as the Kattaneen, where the cottons and cloths are sold; the Attareen, or spice market; the Saffareen, or brass market; the Shemain, or dried fruit and candle market. Fez possesses a great number of mosques and shrines; it has been stated that the number is as high as two hundred, but this may be an overestimate. The most noteworthy and largest of these mosques are the Mosque of Mulai Idrees and the Karuëein. As has already been said, the approaches to the former are marked by a wooden bar across the street

to prevent the passage of mules and donkeys. The portion thus railed off is paved with tiles and kept clean and clear of refuse. Entrance to all mosques in Morocco is strictly forbidden to Europeans, but one can now pass by the open doors and get a glimpse of part of the interior, although the actual tomb of the saint is hidden from view. The Karuëein is said to be one of the largest mosques in the world, and capable of accommodating as many as 22,000 worshippers. It has eighteen doors, and, passing these, long vistas can be obtained of innumerable rows of pillars covered halfway up with matting, and glimpses of a great tiled and sunlit courtyard with beautiful fountains in coloured mosaics. This great mosque has always been the University of Fez, where the students or Tolba, who live in the Medersas, come for instruction. The procedure is simple, the teacher merely sitting on a chair in some corner of the building, and giving his comments on some passage in the Koran to his pupils gathered round him. The library attached to this mosque was once famous throughout the world, but little now remains, and, from what can be learned of its contents, no startling discoveries are likely to be made when, as must happen shortly, Europeans gain access to it. The Andalus Mosque, though much smaller, is also very fine, and near it is an exquisite little Medersa containing beautiful carved woodwork,—an old-world nook where, at a fountain of clear spring water, women and girls fill their graceful jars. What might have been a disaster of the first magnitude threatened Fez in the early morning of 22nd June 1918. It was near the end of Ramadan, and the whole city was sunk in slumber. Suddenly the alarm was given, and it was discovered that the Kaiseria, a cotton-market lying between the two mosques of Mulai Idrees and the Karuëein, had taken fire and was blazing fiercely. At first nothing was done, and soon hordes of looters were at work taking advantage of the occasion; but, after a considerable delay, the French authorities were informed, and the military were immediately sent down with hand-pumps to fight the flames, while an armed cordon was drawn round the quarter, and plunderers were apprehended. Thanks to the efforts of the French officers, who, taking off their coats, worked like heroes, the fire was at last mastered, but not before immense stocks of cotton and other goods had been burnt or charred, and many merchants all but ruined, while the sacred shrine of Mulai Idrees only just escaped. Should this venerated mosque have been destroyed, it would have caused an immense sensation throughout Morocco, and a general rising against the Christians would probably have followed.

The French have now con-

structed a carriage-road right round the city, from which, at intervals, most extensive and beautiful views can be obtained. On a clear spring or autumn day it is hard to imagine that anything could be more lovely than the picture which Fez presents from the heights, either to the north or the south of the old town. From these heights Fez is completely dominated by a series of forts,—some of them built by the Sultans as protection against the neighbouring tribes, the remainder erected by the French after the revolution of 1912, and equipped with field-guns which could speedily reduce the city to ruins. From the Borj Nord, or biggest fort on the north side, the panorama is very grand. The foreground falls sharply down, covered with cactus and olive, to the dark-green foliage of the gardens, filled with fruit trees and blazing in the autumn with red and gold. Beyond them the ground again rises to the line of the battlemented walls, grey with age, which, cracked and crumbling, lean this way and that, apparently always on the verge of collapse. Inside them is the great grey mass of the city,—the flat-roofed houses so jumbled together that they seem piled one upon another as they spill in a great cascade down the steep slope. On the farther side rise wooded heights studded with old tombs, and saint-houses with their domed and fluted roofs; beyond them are other heights dark with olives; and still farther rise blue and distant hills; while, dominating all, south-eastwards on the far horizon, the great snow-fields of "Jebel Musa Es Salah" and the "Bou Iblan" tower high against the clear blue sky, the highest part of the Middle Atlas, and the stronghold of the Beni Warein—a great Berber tribe who, independent since the beginning of history, still to this day preserve their uplands unexplored and untrodden by the feet of the unbeliever. The writer has spent hours with a powerful telescope scanning the snows and the lower slopes, which are thickly covered with magnificent cedar forest. On a clear day, and even at forty miles, enough can be seen to show how lovely this mountain country must be, and already the French have projects for the building of hotels as sanatoriums, and centres for winter sports, when the country has been finally conquered and rendered safe for travellers. The view of Fez from the south is almost equally beautiful and picturesque, but the horizon is more limited, being bounded to the north by the great grey mass of Jebel Zalagh, which rises steeply to a height of 2000 feet above the city. It is a constant source of pleasure to view this panorama at sunset—when the old walls and mosque towers glow pink in the level rays, and the lower parts of the city are lost in violet shadows; while flights of snow-white egrets wing their way up from the valley of the Sebu to their roosting-places in the gardens; and over all rise the distant heights

of Atlas, the snows flushed rosy in the setting sun. Another delight is to sit on some bright moonlight night in early summer on one of the flat roofs in the upper part of Fez, and gaze out over the sleeping city pure white in the moonbeams, silent and mysterious, while overhead the stars gleam and twinkle in the clear African sky.

Despite all its attractions, the climate of Fez is very trying to the majority of Europeans. There are days in spring and autumn when the temperature is ideal; but the summer months—*i.e.*, June to September—are burning hot. The two prevailing winds are the east and west. When the east wind or Sirocco blows, the air is like the breath from a furnace, and seems to scorch the very marrow in one's bones, while existence becomes well-nigh intolerable and nature languishes; the surface of the earth is all parched and yellow, and the ground so dry that it is hard to believe that it could ever recover or become green once more. Not only is this east wind hot, but it brings with it all manner of noisome insects, and has the effect of stringing up the nerves to an extraordinary pitch. The west wind, on the contrary, always brings relief and cooler weather, and seems to sweep away the flies. October and November are perhaps the best months of the whole year; the days are clear and sunny and just cold enough to be pleasant, while the autumn tints and young green grass are a delight to the eye. Winter—*i.e.*, December to the beginning of March—is often delightful out of doors but bitterly cold inside the houses, which are not constructed for warmth; in fact, contrary to conditions elsewhere, one puts on an overcoat indoors and takes it off to go out. In wet weather the country becomes almost impassable owing to the mud, and the steep streets of the city so slippery that progression is difficult. March and April are the flowery months, when the whole country is covered with bloom, and the hills round Fez are carpeted with iris, pimpernel, purple convolvuli, musk balsam, vetches, pink immortelles, wild mignonette, larkspur, thyme, ox-eye daisies, hyacinths, poppies, and many others too numerous to mention: so thick that every step crushes them under foot—a wild riot of bloom and colour, but short-lived, for by the middle of May everything has once more withered before the fiery breath of summer. Gardens in Fez do well if properly looked after, and almost anything can be grown with care, since water, the great essential, is always at command. The Moors cultivate a species of small rose from which they make rose-water, and when this flowers great donkey-loads of blooms are sold in the streets, perfuming the air with their sweetness. Most fruits can also be grown, and every garden has its orange, lemon, pomegranate, plum, fig, peach, and apricot trees, but the three last-named are small and lack the flavour of the home variety.

Grapes are grown in the surrounding country, from which excellent raisins are made, but no wine, although the Meknez district produces a very fair variety.

As regards the government of the city, the original system of local functionaries is adhered to as far as possible. The Basha, or governor, still dispenses summary justice with the aid of his Khalifa or assistant, and the Kadis, or native judges, settle points of law; but all are under very strict control, and a record of every case has to be kept and submitted to the French officials concerned. There are rather a bewildering number of Bureaux dealing with Municipal and Regional affairs, and a Juge de Paix who hears cases against Europeans; although all serious cases, both native and European, are tried by the Supreme Court at Rabat, which is now the centre of the administration and the residence of the Resident-General. It would be idle to pretend that this new order of things is altogether popular with the natives, but this is hardly to be wondered at when one considers how fanatical and independent they are as a race.

Feast-days in Fez are always interesting. On these occasions guns are discharged in the streets, and musicians on mule-back promenade the main thoroughfares, blowing a kind of pipe with a high shrill note, and followed by crowds of men and boys, who often proceed thus to the shrine of Mulai Idrees with a bullock or sheep which they sacrifice at the door of the mosque. During the great feast of the Aid el Kebeer thousands of sheep are brought in from the country and slaughtered in the houses. On certain occasions the population goes out *en masse* to some saint-house outside the city, and the scene is most interesting and picturesque. The ground is covered with the white-robed throng, and all sorts of entertainments are in full swing: here a story-teller, there an unfortunate monkey on a chain being baited by small boys, again a snake-charmer or a bevy of dancers. Often during the feasts the flat roofs of the city are crowded towards evening with women in bright-coloured dresses, and the result, when seen from some coign of vantage, is very pleasing and effective. There are two sects in Morocco, the Hamadcha and the Aissoua, whose followers give themselves over to the most barbarous and degrading practices. The Hamadcha perform a kind of dance, leaping into the air and, as they alight, bringing down on their heads with considerable force a sort of battle-axe which cuts deeply into their scalps, and they soon become covered with their own blood, and present a most disgusting spectacle until they fall faint and exhausted to make room for others. The Aissoua, or followers of Sidi Aissa, repair every year to the tomb of their patron saint at Meknez. At this time they work themselves up into a

state of frenzy, dancing madly for hours, tearing the carcases of sheep and goats to pieces with their hands, and eating great lumps of the raw flesh. The women are even worse than the men, and a band of Aissoua with their blood-stained garments, long hair, and ghastly features, when encountered in a narrow street, are repulsive in the extreme and best avoided, for in their excited state they are more like wild beasts than human beings.

Existence in Fez is sometimes varied by an invitation to a Moorish feast. These are often given specially in honour of Europeans, and in that case they are generally in the middle of the day; but the most interesting and attractive are the wedding feasts, which last for several days, and on one night of which the master of the house usually invites his Christian friends. Arrived at the door of the house, one is greeted by a member of the family, who conducts the guests to the central courtyard where the host receives them. The scene is a gay one; the house is brightly illuminated with countless candles, and the rooms decorated with coloured hangings which have often rather a gaudy hue. Round the walls are ranged thick mattresses covered with flowered and embroidered silks, and piled with cushions of the famous Fez needlework. A curious and universal feature is the presence of large brass bedsteads with silk canopies; they are not kept for use but only for show purposes, as are also numerous clocks of different designs. The walls are often hung with splendid gold-embroidered hangings which give a very rich effect. In the courtyard are seated a troupe of musicians and singers, who play for hours upon various stringed instruments. When all the guests are assembled ewers and basins of silver are brought in, and every one washes his hands. Then low round tables are placed in the corners, and the guests gather round them sitting on the mattresses or cushions. Knives and forks there are none, and only the right hand can be used for eating.

The first dish makes its appearance—generally the pastella, a great platter of pastry covering pieces of roasted pigeons; this is an excellent dish, and generally considered by Europeans to be the best in the native cook's repertoire. Then follows a great piece of roast mutton, from which the diners tear pieces, often burning their fingers in the attempt. At this stage drinks of various kinds are handed round: sometimes only plain water, but often orange juice, milk flavoured with rose-water, a drink made of crushed almonds, a decoction of pomegranates or a kind of cherry cordial, according to season; but never wine, for this is taboo for all good Mussulmans. After the mutton comes a succession of dishes of chicken done in various ways,—with saffron, stuffed with raisins and

almonds, or covered with various spices. When these have been disposed of the national dish, Couscous, is brought in, and is generally eaten by Europeans with the help of spoons, although the natives adroitly work the crumbly meal into balls and shoot it into their mouths. This often ends the repast; but perhaps yet another dish may follow—usually a sweet made of almond paste or orange liths covered with sugar. The ewers and basins again make their appearance, and the hands, by this time thoroughly greasy, are well washed. The guests rearrange themselves on the divans, and the tables are carried out. After a short interval coffee is served in glass tumblers, and then, about a quarter of an hour later, silver trays are brought in and the famous Moorish mint tea is carefully and elaborately made, often by the host himself, the quantity of sugar used being, to our ideas, quite extraordinary. In fact, the writer has often wondered what his friends at home, restricted to such a small allowance, would have said could they have seen the amount of food and sugar that was consumed. During the drinking of the tea, three glasses of which are *de rigueur*, bottles of orange-flower or rose-water are offered to each guest, and incense-burners are handed round with which to perfume one's garments. The guests are now presumed to have reached that pitch of happiness which a good and liberal dinner, congenial society, and sweet perfumes can alone engender; and after a short interval they rise to depart, with many thanks to their host, who repeats his assurances that they have been welcome, and depreciates the feast he has furnished.

To those who look below the surface, the change that is coming over Old Fez is very marked. The number of Europeans is steadily growing; more and more of the inhabitants are adopting such things as European boots and shoes, jackets, and cloth caps, which, from the artistic standpoint, is deplorable; the old city is being ruined by a hideous installation of electric light which, with its iron stanchions and heavy wire cables, goes far to ruin the picturesqueness of the streets; and a new generation, taught in the French schools, is springing up. But sometimes to those who have known the old régime there will come a feeling of regret; for it is always sad to see the last sanctuaries of old-time thought and custom vanishing in the flood of modern progress—disappearing one by one, like sand-castles built by children's hands, which crumble when the tide comes in.

EASTERN NIGHTS—AND FLIGHTS.

(BEING AN INTERRUPTED SEQUEL TO 'AN AIRMAN'S OUTINGS.')

A RECORD OF CAPTURE IN PALESTINE, ADVENTURE IN TURKEY, AND ESCAPE THROUGH RUSSIA.

BY "CONTACT" (CAPTAIN ALAN BOTT, M.C.)

CHAPTER III.—THE FLIGHT THAT FAILED.

My hospital days at Tul-Keran were dreadful. To begin with, the hospital itself was altogether beastly. After my head had been shaved until it looked like a door-knob, I was taken to a sheetless, dirty-blanketed bed, in an overcrowded ward that reeked of unwashed flesh. The beds were so close that one had to climb into them from the foot, so that there was no chance of escaping the smell. On my right was a Syrian doctor with a smashed leg; and on my left, not two feet away, was a young Turkish officer with aggravated syphilis, who groaned and complained all day long. When he was not in pain he read pamphlets in Turkish (copies of which had been distributed to all the patients), explaining just how England had shamefully attacked the peace-loving Turks and Germans without warning.

The two windows were both broken, and through them the scorching sun poured all day long. Tul-Keran, being in low-lying country, is infested throughout the hot summer of Samaria by legions of flies. In our hospital they settled in their swarms on beds, faces, food, hands and arms, and flew at random from one diseased patient to another. At night they gave place to hordes of mosquitoes that pounced upon and bit every particle of a man's body left exposed. The sole relief, by day or by night, was to hide one's head under the filthy blankets; and then the closeness and the reek made one gasp for breath.

But worst of all was an intense agony of mind. I lay in bed and thought of my squadron going through its daily rounds a few miles south-west of me; of my last air-fight, and whether I might not have avoided capture by adopting different tactics; of what the sinister word "missing" would convey to various people in England and France; of whether I was destined to spend months or years in captivity; and of the general beastliness of everything. Above all, I railed, uselessly and illogically, against Fate.

The Austrian staff of the

hospital offered whatever kindnesses they could, and treated me rather better than they treated the Turks. Each morning the doctor brought me the Vienna 'Reichspost' to read, and after a passing glance at my distorted features (I was known as "the Englishman with the face"), stayed to chat for several minutes. He was charming and decorative, with his light-blue uniform, his curled moustache, and his medals; but I never once saw him pay any medical attention to patients, beyond ordering medicine or saying that each man was progressing wonderfully well.

A good-hearted but race-proud Austrian priest often stopped by my bedside for a friendly argument about the war. For its outbreak he blamed Russia in the first place, but seemed to regard Germany as the second culprit, although he delivered himself of the usual propaganda-manufactured story of a Machiavellian Sir Edward Grey, whose agents worked nefariously in dark corners against the legitimate development of the Central Powers. I gathered, from many hints, that he shared with most Austrian officers a hearty dislike of the Germans. For Frenchmen and Englishmen, as distinct from France and England, he professed sympathy and respect. He performed many services for me, such as changing some Egyptian notes at almost their full value, instead of at the ruinous rate of exchange offered by Turkish banks and traders. He was, however, a rabid hater in one connection—he could find no words bad enough for the Czechs and other subject-races of Austria-Hungary. To him it seemed a crime that they should be discontented with the suppression of their racial sentiments and institutions, and should agitate for self-expression.

"They must either be loyal to us or cease to exist," he said.

Once I mentioned inadvertently that I had met Másaryk in London and admired him—and that was the end of my friendly relations with this otherwise kindly padre, who afterwards was polite but distant.

One morning there came a German officer, very tall, very correct, and wearing the badge of an observer in the German Flying Corps. He clicked his heels, bowed from the waist upwards, and inquired: "Hauptmann Bott?"

I admitted to the name and rank, whereupon the visitor introduced himself as Oberleutnant Wolff, the man whose shots had punctured my petrol tank and brought my machine down in the mountains. Having apologised for the state of my face, he offered to drop over some British aerodrome a letter announcing that I was alive and would like some clothes. In accordance with the polite relations between British and German aviators in Palestine, I was

visited by several other Flying Officers, each of whom—out of pure kindness of heart as I thought—made the same suggestion. When, however, I had written the letter, and addressed it to "British Air Force, Palestine," I was told that no communication could be sent unless I addressed it by name to my late Squadron Commander, giving the number of the squadron and the situation of the aerodrome—all of which would have been highly useful information. I refused to write such an address, and said I would do without my kit. The stipulation must have been bluff, however, for Oberleutnant Wolff took the original letter and dropped it over the British aerodrome at Ramleh, which was well known to him.

Every few days British aeroplanes flew low over Tul-Keran, and bombed either the railway station or the local encampments. When this happened, Turks and Arabs would scurry from the road while the anti-aircraft guns were firing, and all our orderlies would disappear until the bombardment had ended. Soon after Oberleutnant Wolff's last visit an aeroplane, instead of making for the railway, hovered above a large meadow used as a landing ground, and let fall what must have looked like an enormous bomb. It whirled down slowly, by reason of the long streamers attached to the head of it. It did not explode, and the aeroplane left without troubling Tul-Keran any further. The "bomb" was a sack containing kit for myself and Major Evans (captured three weeks earlier), which a British pilot had risked his neck to bring.

A German Unteroffizier brought the sack to the hospital, and opened it before me. He searched nearly everything — boots, underclothes, and trousers — and actually ripped open the lining of a tunic in a hunt for hidden papers. But what he did not find—and I did—was a tiny slip of tissue, sewn into the corner of a collar, with this message scribbled on it: "Dear Bottle—So glad you're alive. Never say die! Dine with me at the Savoy when we meet after the war.—'X.'"

Six months later — before the end of the war—when I had escaped from Turkey, I did dine with "X"; but at Shepheard's Hotel, Cairo, and not the Savoy.

The kit was very welcome, for I had been flying in my shirt-sleeves when shot down; but still more welcome was the knowledge that people at home would know that I lived. With this worry removed I now had a clearer mind for preparing an escape. Moreover, my leg was feeling stronger every day, so that I hoped to make the attempt quite soon.

While thinking over my plan one morning, I was interrupted by a soft-spoken sentence in French from the Syrian doctor with the smashed leg—

"M. le Capitaine, both of

us would like to be in some place away from these Turks."

At the time I did not know to what a state of despair the Syrians had been brought by misery and oppression; and in any case it seemed unwise to let a stranger know that I hoped to escape.

"Naturally," I replied, "I should like to be out of the hands of the Turks, although I suppose they will keep me till the end of the war. For me it is damnable here. But you?"

"For you it is a thousand times better than for me," he said with intensity, though still speaking in a low voice. "For two years I have been living among people who are half-savage and wholly ignorant. Because I am a Christian, their officers try to treat me like a dog. All the time I was with an infantry regiment I never knew when one of those Turkish beasts would shoot me. Nothing would be done to a soldier who did shoot me. I am certain I have remained untouched only because doctors are scarce. Several other doctors—Syrians and Jews—ran away and managed to reach the British lines at night-time; but I had no chance."

He continued to tell of the disgusting conditions which he had to share with Turkish soldiers, who lived more like animals than human beings. I happened to have met a Syrian doctor who, after escaping from the Turkish Army, was practising medicine in Alexandria, at which my bed neighbour was envious and interested. His own intention, if the Turks allowed him to go to his home at Damascus until the broken leg healed, was to slip out of the city and, keeping east of the Turkish lines in the Jordan Valley with one of the secret caravans that the Armenians and Arabs had organised, trek down to Akaba, where were the Hedjaz Arabs allied to the British. He suggested that if I were sent to the same hospital in Damascus we might make the attempt together.

So we talked on, in the heat of the afternoon, keeping silent for long intervals so as not to excite suspicion. All this while the diseased Turk on my left, who could speak nothing but Turkish and Arabic, was moaning and tossing.

That evening, after thinking matters over, I decided that my slight chances of getting back to the British lines by swimming down the coast could scarcely be lessened, and might be improved, if I asked the Syrian for advice. He was very sympathetic and quite unsurprised, but he did not think the chances of success were great, because of the thousands of soldiers in the district through which I should have to pass. Nevertheless, if my leg became stronger I might possibly scrape through, he said. As for him, he would like enormously to come with me, but he was helpless.

My leg did get better very rapidly, and I began to make final preparations. Each day

the Syrian and I saved pieces of bread, so that I might have a store to take with me. The supply of water would be a more difficult question, as I had nothing in which to carry it. This problem was solved by a Turkish general.

One morning the orderlies tidied the room feverishly until it looked almost clean, while announcing that "The Pasha" was coming. General Djouad Pasha, Commander of the 8th Turkish Army, arrived soon afterwards, attended by a mixed collection of Turkish, German, and Austrian officers—each of which national groups kept itself separate and tried to look as if it had no connection with the others. He talked amiably to the Turkish patients, amid a chorus of "Yes, Excellency," and "No, Excellency," and more than amiably to me. Was I getting better, and would I like some wine sent to me? The answer in each case was a truthful "yes." To the doctor with the smashed leg he was abrupt and aloof when he discovered him to be a Syrian, and curtly refused the Christian's request that he might be sent to his home in Damascus until convalescent.

The general left, with his ill-assorted staff elbowing each other in the doorway for precedence; and I heard the Syrian swearing softly to himself for many minutes.

From Djouad Pasha came, that same afternoon, two bottles of Moselle and a flask of eau-de-Cologne, addressed to "The English guest of Turkey." In that house of a thousand and one stenches the eau-de-Cologne was welcome as a well in a pathless desert. The Syrian and I drank the wine, leaving a little in one of the bottles, to mix with the water I should take when I flitted.

The only remaining difficulty that I could overcome before starting was that of clothes. This I settled by deciding to wear, over a night-shirt, one of the smock dressing-gowns provided by the hospital. In this and a pair of slippers, and with a white towel arranged as a head-dress, I should not look so very different from an Arab at night-time, as long as I kept moving.

Came the day when I found I could walk without pain or trouble; and although I still could scarcely see with the left eye, I determined to leave without delay, as I was in danger of being moved from Tul-Keran very shortly.

I kept awake from sunset until three A.M., hoping that the Austrian night-orderly would follow his usual custom of dozing, whereupon I would slip by him into the yard, and thence climb up a drain-pipe to the wall that fringed the hospital roof. But the orderly remained obstinately alert until it was too late for my attempt, for I should have to leave some hours before dawn, if I wanted to put a sufficient distance between myself and the hospital before choosing a hiding-place in which to pass the next day.

Having slept through the

afternoon, I again watched during the night, and again the Austrian kept awake. On the third night I fell asleep at 2 A.M., disappointed and almost hopeless when, once more, the orderly gave me no chance.

It must have been about half an hour later when I was awakened by loud reports and by the chatter of the Turks. Guns were firing all around the town—one of them from a field fronting the hospital. I knew that they must be anti-aircraft guns. Either Tul-Keran itself was being raided, or machines were passing to bomb some other place.

The hospital was electric with disorder. Turkish patients talked excitedly and crowded into the lower rooms. In the ward opposite mine a man who, twelve hours earlier, had undergone an operation, called loudly for help. The orderly, himself almost helpless from funk, ran across in answer to the cries.

Now, while everything and everybody was in confusion, or never was my chance to escape from the hospital. I rolled up my blanket and placed it under the quilt, so as to give the appearance of a man asleep, donned my dressing-gown, shook hands silently with the Syrian, and went out to the yard. Somebody passed close by me, towards the back-door. I dodged and locked myself in a closet until he was in the house.

When all was quiet, I went into the open yard, put my parcel (the bottle of water and the store of dry bread, tied up in a towel) between my teeth, and began climbing up the drain-pipe. It was a more difficult task than I had expected. The wall was flat, and showed few cracks that could be used as footholds. I scraped the skin from face, arms, and legs as I struggled upward, a few feet at a time. At last I was high enough to touch the gutter and haul myself, with many a gasp, on to the roof's edge. While I was doing this the first disaster happened — the package fell from my mouth. I kept perfectly still, expecting a loud noise; but the parcel fell with nothing worse than a dull thud, the bottle being saved from breaking by the bread around it.

Although nobody came into the yard, I did not go down again, for every minute counted; and, moreover, I was certain that I should not have the strength to climb that drain-pipe a second time. I determined to make the attempt without the bread and water and the towel, which was to have served as head-dress.

I clambered along the side of the roof, keeping in the shadow, until I reached the front of the building. All was clear for me—the guns were still firing, the street was deserted, and the sentry, who should have been below, had gone into the hospital for safety. I caught hold of the right-hand corner of the gutter with both hands,

lowered myself until my body was dangling down with arms fully extended, and dropped.

Then came the second disaster. Although the roof was low, and the length of my body deducted five-and-three-quarter feet from the total drop, yet the shock when I touched earth was considerable. I landed purposely on my left foot, since the left leg was uninjured, but I toppled sideways and again hurt the bruised thigh, which throbbed with pain.

I lay in the shadow of the wall for a few seconds, but knowing that I could not remain there for long undiscovered, I looked around to see if the streets were clear. Not a soul was about, for the anti-aircraft guns were still barking, seemingly at nothing. I went out into the vague light of the quarter-moon, and began walking in the direction of the coast.

A hundred yards to westward brought me past the straggling line of buildings and along the open road. Then came several groups of tents by the roadside. After I had left these behind, I cut away to the left, across open country. All this while I was in such a tense and exalted state of mind that I did not sense whether the night air was warm or cold, or whether the ground was smooth or rough.

Pain, however, was a sensation that could not be buried by abnormal mental tension. My thigh throbbed relentlessly and maddeningly as I stumbled on, taking my direction as best I could from the stars.

By now the guns were silent, and people came from their hiding-places. A small band of Bedouins approached out of the dimness, and I sank to the ground until they had ridden by and were on the road. Again I began to walk, but a few minutes later halted a second time. Two Turkish soldiers, their cloth helmets outlined against a tree, passed some distance to my right, whining an unmusical chant. I staggered forward for about another hundred yards and then, weak and half-mad with the persistent, ever-increasing ache in my thigh, I lay down in a small hollow.

The next half-hour was perhaps the most bitter period through which I have lived. I should never reach the coast with my injured leg, I realised. Yet here I was, wearing but a night-shirt and a dressing-gown, and helpless in Turkish territory, only a quarter of an hour's walk from the hospital whence I had tried to escape. I could go no farther—or very little farther—and if I remained in the hollow until morning I should inevitably be caught; and if I were caught, heaven only knew what would happen. And I suddenly realised that it was cold, and that scores of mosquitoes were biting my face, arms, and legs. And the throb, throb, throbbing in the right leg continued.

Then the crescent moon disappeared and the dark-grey light faded into a blackness

that covered the crops and countryside, and above all, myself.

I felt suicidal, and remained inert for half an hour longer. Finally, I decided that my best plan was to return to the hospital and try to re-enter it unobserved. I staggered back through the darkness, and more by luck than judgment hit the road. Slowly and very painfully I made my way into Tul-Keran. I passed the tents and houses without taking any precaution against being stopped and questioned; but nobody took the least notice, possibly because, in the dark, my dressing-gown would look like the robe of an Arab.

I came within sight of the hospital and found the sentry strolling aimlessly in front of it, from the main gate to the side entrance round the corner. When he had turned the corner I slipped up the pathway to the front door, which, from past observation, I knew would not be locked. I had been absent for two hours, and already the first glimmer of an eastern dawn had lassoed the countryside.

I unlatched the door, entered the passage—and found myself face to face with the Austrian night-orderly. Open-eyed with wonder, he stared at my dusty, dirty dressing-gown, and my muddied legs and slippers, then grabbed me by the arm and called out, "Der Englander!"

CHAPTER IV.—NAZARETH—AND THE CHRISTIAN CHARITY OF A JEW.

"The Englishman!" he repeated, gripping my arm harder than ever. Then, after a puzzled pause: "Where have you been?"

"For a walk. I was upset by the air raid. My head has been very bad since the smash, and sometimes I don't know what I'm doing. But I'm better now, and I give you my word of honour that I will stay quietly in bed. Only say nothing to the Turks."

This Austrian, although very stupid, had always seemed a good fellow; and now, on hearing the word "Ehrenwort"—word of honour—he dropped his attitude of anxiety and suspicion, and became his usual friendly self. A wounded Turk came into the passage to see what was happening, but the orderly sent him away. He withdrew with a look of surprise at my disordered appearance.

"Good," replied the Austrian. "I shall say nothing to the Turks, but when the corporal comes I must tell him, and he will tell the Herr Doktor. But I shall ask the corporal not to mention it to the others."

He led me back to the ward, and there noticed, for the first time, how a rolled-up blanket underneath the discoloured quilt made my bed seem as if it were occupied by a man.

"Na, na," he said as he straightened the blanket, "this doesn't look as if you

only went for a walk. Well, I have your word of honour that you will keep quiet, and the Herr Doktor must decide what is to be done."

Tired out and so despairing as to care nothing of what might happen, I fell asleep. In the heat of mid-morning I was awakened by the corporal, who told me to come with him to the doctor's room. As I limped painfully along the corridor I was still tired and but half awake, so that while I remembered something vaguely unpleasant, I could not define exactly what had happened.

"Herr Hauptmann," said the corporal with a grin, "your injured leg was not improved by the walk during the air raid"—and only then did I remember fully the bitter happenings of a few hours earlier.

Charming and decorative as ever, the blue-uniformed, much-medalled doctor rose from his chair and shook hands with exaggerated ceremony. The priest stood silent and bowed coldly, as if to imply that my misdeeds were exactly what one would expect from an admirer of Másaryk.

"Night walks," said the doctor, "are bad for people with injured legs and faces. As your medical adviser, I should advise you to remain in bed for the future."

"I hope I shall be permitted to follow your advice, Herr Doktor."

"That being so, perhaps you will tell us exactly where you went and why you did it."

Well knowing that with so many proofs of an attempted escape, anything but frankness would be futile, I admitted having tried to return to the British Army. My leg had failed me after half a mile, I added, and realising the madness of the adventure, I had tried to return unobserved.

"So! I ought to have known that you would find some chance of escape when so near the front. And now, what do you expect?"

"If I may presume on your kindness, I ask that I may stay here until sent away in the normal course of events. I hope you will let me remain in hospital, on the understanding that I give my word of honour to be good, so long as I am in Tul-Keran."

"That will be difficult. I myself have no objection, and the word of honour is guarantee enough against further wanderings. But if the news of your escapade got beyond the hospital I should be forced to make a full report."

The doctor learned from the corporal that, apart from the four of us present, the only person who knew the story was the night-orderly, who could be trusted to keep quiet. After a low-voiced discussion with the priest, he gave instructions that nobody else must be told. He then promised to make no report, unless the news leaked out, and his hand was forced thereby. I thanked him and withdrew.

But the news did leak out. Either the orderly told it, or

the Turkish patient who had seen me in the passage, after my return, formed his own conclusions and communicated them to other people. At any rate, several Turks came into the ward and discussed (according to the Syrian's whispered translations) my sortie of the early morning. One man even went so far as to say that I had gone out and signalled to the British aeroplanes. The Syrian, by the way, was greatly concerned about whether anybody suspected that he had been privy to the attempt, but I was able to reassure him.

Evidently the story became so widely known that the hospital authorities had to make their report. Late in the afternoon I was told to dress and collect my belongings, as the Turks were taking me from the hospital. Having obeyed, I was handed over to an escort of two Turkish soldiers, with drawn bayonets.

"Adieu," said the Syrian. "I shall pray for you and for happier times."

The doctor shook hands ceremoniously when I left, and the priest—affable once more—gave me a heavy stick to help support my thigh, saying that he hoped we should meet as friends after the war.

Bareheaded in the searing sun (for my friends had forgotten to include a hat in my kit) I was led through a gaping crowd to the railway station. There my guard joined forces with another Turk, who had in his charge the dirtiest Arab I have ever seen. His sole dress was a pair of tattered trousers and a faded overcoat, from the left side of which a filthy arm protruded naked. His headdress, a much-torn strip of dingy rag, seemed to have lain for a long time in some muddy pool. Clots of dirt dotted his face, his feet, and the lower part of his legs, which were bare. His moustache and straggling beard were powdered with sand and gravel; and on looking closely at his middle, where the trousers-tops gave place to uncovered flesh, I saw two lice on the inner surface of the rough cloth.

The Arab and I looked at each other curiously, after the manner of fellow-prisoners seeing each other for the first time. Then an interrogation, evidently interrupted by our arrival, was continued. This consisted of a Turkish officer shouting menaces at the Arab, who replied, whenever he was given a chance, with fluent explanations and pleading gestures. Presently a German Unteroffizier, who spoke Arabic well, and seemed to be an interpreter, joined the group. He also threatened the Arab, and I saw him place thumb and finger on his windpipe, as if to suggest strangling. This badgering of the poor brute continued until finally the Arab opened his hands and said something in a resigned tone, whereat a thrill of excitement passed through the gathering; and the Turkish officer, before leaving us, wrote several lines on the

official papers carried by the Arab's guard.

The Unteroffizier turned his attention to me, and finding that I could speak German, talked of many things, from Hindenburg's advance in France to his own home in the former German colony at Jaffa.

"You have a pleasant companion," he said, nodding towards the Arab.

I asked who the pleasant companion might be and what was his crime, and heard in reply a strange tale. The Arab, it appeared, had been found wandering suspiciously behind the front of the 8th Turkish Army. His garment was found to be a relic of what had once been an overcoat of Turkish military pattern, so that he was arrested as a deserter and possibly a spy. He told a rambling tale of how he had been a soldier in an Egyptian battalion fighting for the British, but, after undergoing torture from his officers, had escaped across the lines. Even the Turks could not be convinced that British officers tortured their men; and, the Arab having shown himself to be a liar, they were more than ever convinced that he was a spy. The Turkish officer, in the course of the conversation I had heard, theatened to hang him unless he confessed. At last the Arab (who, in my opinion, was not a spy, whatever he might be), terror-stricken at the threat that he could only save himself from hanging by a "confession," let himself be badgered into a declaration — true or false— that he was a spy. So they hanged him, as I learned afterwards, at Damascus.

For several hours we remained on the platform, where the Arab and I were rival attractions for general curiosity. Then, late in the evening, we were hustled into a truck marked in German "12 horses or 40 men." As a matter of fact, more than fifty Turkish soldiers must have crowded into the truck before the train started. Our party kept together in one of the corners, where we found just room enough to sit down without being trampled upon. I placed the kit-bag between myself and the Arab as a barrier against lice—although, for that matter, most of the Turkish soldiers were verminous.

That night I performed the first of many nightmare journeys on Turkish railways. Although each side of the truck was open for about three feet, the atmosphere was intensely stuffy, so that it was difficult to breathe when seated on the floor. The filthy crowd of Turks spat all over the place, and exuded dozens of different smells. The train jolted unevenly, with many a bump and halt, over the badly-kept track. Sleep was impossible, and by the time I was hauled on to the platform at Afuleh, nine hours later, I was heavy-eyed and faint with wakefulness, weakness, and disgust.

Afuleh is but a few miles from Nazareth (then the

Turco-German General Headquarters on the Palestine front), and to Nazareth we trudged. This beautiful little town is on a high hill, around which the road to it winds upward at a steep angle. With its white buildings and setting, it offers a magnificent view as one climbs the hill. But really to enjoy it the conditions should be other than when, although weak and ill, and scarcely able to walk by reason of a bad leg, one must climb painfully up the steep slope, under an intense sun, with a retinue of half-savage guards.

The Arab and I were led through the old winding streets, gaped at by listless pedestrians, to the Turkish Platzkommandant's office. The Platzkommandant—a swollen balloon of a man—asked a question, and the Arab's reply drew all eyes in my direction. Having understood only a few words of the Arabic, I wondered how I could be concerned in the charges against the pleasant companion. The Platzkommandant, after examining my papers, spoke with somebody on the telephone. Then, although not a word had been spoken to me, we were both led outside and through some narrow streets to a square stone building. Not until we were inside it did I hear, from a police-officer who spoke a little French, why I was there. Having noticed that rather more consideration was given to me than to him, and thinking that he might obtain better treatment by hanging on to my coat-tails, the Arab had elaborated his story by saying that I brought him from the British Army in my aeroplane. Evidently the Platzkommandant, without giving me the chance to deny this fantastic tale, had telephoned to Turkish General Headquarters, which ordered that the "spy" and I, as accomplices in crime, should be kept together. And here we were, inside what I learned was the civil criminal jail.

I protested with vehemence and ridicule against the belief in the Arab's absurd statement. I pointed out that my machine was a single-seater, and that it had been shot down in the mountains. His story was therefore impossible. The police-officer promised to forward these protests to military headquarters, but as for him, his orders were that the Arab and I were to remain together. In any case, he added, I was probably being punished for trying to escape.

Remain together we did in a superlatively filthy cell. I would rather live in a British jail than in most of the poorer dwellings of the Turkish provinces, where donkeys and dogs and hens and men and women and children herd together in mud huts. As for most Turkish jails, I would rather live in a British pigsty. Even after my experience on the train from Tul-Keran, I was surprised by the first sight of that cell. The walls were neither stone nor

wooden, but of hard earth, with holes and cracks all over the surface. The various kinds of dirt that crusted the floor, which must have been left uncleaned for years, had mingled and intermingled until they became a thin layer of slime, giving forth a dank odour. The room was partly underground, although the small iron-barred window, on a level with the floor of the yard and two feet below the ceiling, let in a certain amount of light. Through it crawled all sorts of insects, and hundreds of vermin were to be seen moving in and out of the fissures on the walls. Former tenants had left filth in each of the corners. The cell's dimensions were about twelve feet long, nine wide, and eight high.

Unadulterated bravery, without any trace of suppressed or subconscious fear, does not exist; wherefore, if a man who fought in the war tells you that he never felt the least bit afraid, call him a liar of the goriest. But my experience has convinced me that ordinary bravery—the sort of bravery which is self-control in the face of danger—is the most ordinary of qualities, possessed by most people of every race, sex, and age. But *endurance* is another matter. To all but the lion-hearted there comes a point at which the will to endure breaks down under abnormal strain. Being far from lion-hearted, this now happened to me. When the gendarme banged and bolted the door I became morally dead, and past caring about surroundings or events. Physical weakness, mental agony, a terrible dizziness that resulted from having been bareheaded in the Palestine sun, the succession of privations and revolting surroundings—all these combined to break my spirit. I grabbed the shrinking Arab, who evidently had not reckoned upon being left alone with me, and flung him across the cell. I then sat down in the nearest corner, and, physically and mentally sick, remained inert for many hours.

The next three days I remember as a semi-conscious nightmare. Yet a dreadful nightmare is easier to bear than a dreadful reality, because the horror of it is confined to subconsciousness, and does not touch the surface brain. So it was with me in the criminal jail of Nazareth. I sat through hours of inertia, without comprehension, energy, or a sense of my surroundings, so that I scarcely realised the dirt, the stench, and the general beastliness of the cell. Three times I tried to pass the door, so that I might protest to the police-officer, but I was pushed back by an incredibly stupid guard, who made frequent use of the words that every prisoner in Turkey knew so well—"yok" and "yassak" ("not" and "forbidden"). I gave up the attempt, and relapsed into a state of moral lethargy.

The changes from night to day, from stuffy heat to damp

cold, passed unnoticed, and I cared not whether I lived or died. I felt no hunger and very little thirst. This was fortunate, for hunger could not have been satisfied. Each morning the guards gave us a small loaf of bad bread, in which pieces of straw, string, and wood were plentiful. A carafe was filled with water once a day for the needs of both of us. In the evening a basin of thin soup, with mysterious chunks floating on the surface of it, was placed between us. Without being influenced by its unsavouriness, I felt not the least desire to taste the greasy liquid, the small loaf of bread being quite enough food for the day in my then state of unreal detachment from bodily needs and sensations. As for the Arab, as soon as the basin was brought he squatted on his haunches, scooped his hand into the soup, and having grabbed some floating morsel, stuffed it into his mouth. Afterwards he lapped up the liquid itself in the manner of a dog.

On the morning of the third day we were led from the jail to be interrogated at Turkish headquarters. Although my ferocious headache still remained, the change from the dimness and closeness of the cell to the bright sunlight of the street revived me, and I sniffed the fresh air in gulps. I was passing through Nazareth, watched with evident sympathy by the sad-faced crowd, when I saw an officer of the German Flying Corps. He looked at my pilot's badge and stopped, whereupon I broke away from the guards and approached him. In violent language I protested against my outrageous treatment, and asked the German as a fellow-aviator and a fellow-European to see that the Turks moved me from the criminal jail. The aviator happened to be a friend of Oberleutnant Wolff, who fired the shot that brought me down near Shechem; and having already heard the details of my capture, he recognised at once the absurdity of the Arab's story that I had brought him across the lines to spy for the British. He himself was furious at my bad treatment, for when not fighting each other the relations between German and British pilots in Palestine were of the best. He promised to go straight to German Air Headquarters and enlist its influence for me.

I left the German, and was led by the guards to Turkish Headquarters. For two hours we waited in a corridor. Then, before I had been interviewed, there arrived my friend the German pilot, with two staff officers—a monocled major and a lieutenant. I shook hands and was offered apologies for the brutalities I had suffered. It would all be right now, said the major, as the trio disappeared through the doorway of an office. They returned with a Turkish colonel, who likewise shook hands and apologised. Finally, escorted by a different guard, I was sent away without being ques-

tioned. The last I saw of the Arab was as he staggered and cringed under a box on the ear, delivered by the Turkish colonel.

Once again I was led before the Platzkommandant. Evidently his knuckles had been telephonically rapped as a result of my treatment, for he scowled wickedly as he took my papers and ordered a room to be prepared for me in the barracks. At first this room seemed a paradise after the slimy cell; but after a few days its tiny dimensions—ten feet long by six feet wide—seemed in my solitude to be closing in to crush me. The furniture was a bed with one greasy blanket, and a rickety little table on which stood an earthenware jar for the bad water supplied to me. The only water in Nazareth, by the way, that was not bad and liable to contain disease germs, was that drawn from the famous "Well of the Holy Virgin"; and this the German and Turkish officers and German soldiers monopolised.

Next morning I was again taken to Turkish Headquarters for interrogation. The Intelligence Officer who questioned me was very far from intelligent in his methods. He began by saying outright that now that I had been moved to better quarters, he expected me to show gratitude by giving information. I replied that instead of showing gratitude I ought to receive compensation. He hinted that it was in his power to move me back to the criminal jail.

"Do as you like," I replied; "but since it is obvious that you are very highly civilised, you will do nothing of the kind." Whereupon he smiled fatuously and proceeded to ask leading questions, speaking in French.

"Was the report true that General Allenby had left Palestine for France?"

"I really don't know. Possibly. Possibly not."

"Had I seen General Allenby lately?"

"No. But I have a friend who once saw him driving along a road."

"Were the British preparing an attack near the coast?"

"Possibly. Possibly not. I really don't know when we shall drive you out of Nazareth and Damascus."

These illuminating replies were noted down, word for word, by the bright Intelligence Officer. His desire for details about myself was inexhaustible. I did my best to satisfy it by telling him that I was aged eighteen, had been an aviator for five years, and a soldier for six; had come from England on a ship named the *Hogwash;* had been flying the type of aeroplane known as the Jabberwock; had belonged to No. 1 Training Squadron, the best fighting squadron in Palestine; and thought the war would continue for fifteen and a half years longer. Having presented the Turk with this medley of misinformation, and watched him transfer it to his note-book, I grew tired of invention and protested a lack

of knowledge in reply to every question.

That chat and backchat with the wooden-headed Intelligence Officer was my only conversation, except a few whispered words with a fellow-human, for nearly a week. The Platzkommandant took his revenge for my complaints in two ways—by feeding me very badly, and by inflicting solitary confinement upon me.

Solitary confinement makes a man utterly wretched. Left alone and with nothing to distract his mind, a prisoner can only think, and think, and think,—and all his thoughts are morbid. I had six matches in my pocket, and with these I invented all sorts of games and puzzles. But after a few hours my brain, refusing to concentrate on them, drifted back to the sea of bitter despair. At night-time my great difficulty was to keep my mind, not from drifting, but from *racing*. At the end of four days I was fast losing all sense of balance and normality. At times I regretted not being back in the criminal jail, with the repulsive Arab for company.

The few words I managed to exchange with the Christian woman who tidied my room each morning constituted the great event of the day. This woman—ragged, bootless, and gaunt—would whisper fierce questions in broken French as she threw water on the dusty floor, or stabbed with a hairpin some of the bed-bugs, while the guards watched through the open door to see that we did not conspire.

"Why come not English? We hungry. Pigs of Turks!"

And I had to whisper back that the English would certainly drive the pigs of Turks out of Nazareth.

When she had taken her stooping back and her patchwork clothes out of the room, I would probably not have the chance to speak with anybody, even in a whisper, for the next twenty-four hours. My sole consolation was a green hillside beneath the tiny window. For hours at a time I paced the few feet across the room and back again, then sat on the bed and looked outside at what little I could see of Nazareth.

Several times I saw men, women, and boys walking in a huddled group, with guards around them. Some had their hands shackled, some had a chain linking one arm and one leg, and others were chained by the arm to the next person. They moved aimlessly over the hillside, presumably for exercise, while the Turkish soldiers pushed or beat any who struggled or straggled. On my sixth morning in the barracks I was visited by the Platzkommandant's aide-de-camp, just after such a party had disappeared from view. I asked if these shackled and brow-beaten prisoners were Christians.

"My dear sir," said the aide-de-camp, with all the blandness of the educated Turk when telling a lie, "we never put chains on anybody,

and our Christian criminals are as well treated as anybody. You must be mistaken in what you think to have seen."

After this conversation I never again saw these groups of civilian captives at Nazareth, and I began to think that the strain of solitary confinement had focussed my brain on sights that my eyes never met. Possibly, however, the aide-de-camp had taken care that the chained prisoners should be taken for exercise on the far side of the hill.

Next day the same officer paid me another visit, as he was learning French and wanted practice. When he was in my room I noticed from the window a strange procession. A few banners were carried at the head of it, then came some Turkish soldiers, and finally a mass of men and women shambling along with bowed heads. Somewhere a band was blaring out the horrible whining discord which the Turks called music. Nothing more melancholy and unenthusiastic than the people's attitude could be imagined.

"What's that?" I asked.

"Two days ago the Turks gained a great victory over the British in the Jordan Valley, between Es Salt and Amman. The Governor has organised this procession to celebrate it. The population is showing its joy."

I looked at the sad-faced rabble below, and remarked that they looked more like mourners at a funeral than celebrators of joy. The Turk had spoken, however, without the least suggestion of irony.

Next day he left Nazareth for Tul-Keran. He paid a final visit, and, to my great joy, gave me "an English book," which he had bought in the bazaar. The "English Book" proved to be a copy of a magazine for children, dated 1906. It was even more consciously educative in its statement of elementary principles, and more condescendingly inept in its milk-and-water stories, than the general run of such publications. Yet, in my state of solitary confinement, I revelled in every word. The children's magazine gave me as much pleasure as have the finest books in the world under normal conditions. My mind stopped racing and wandering and retrospecting while I learned all about wireless telegraphy (in twenty lines); how Joshua smote the Canaanites hip and thigh (with an illustration of the walls of Jericho falling before the Israelite trumpeters); how to make lemonade and seed-cake; how not to make trouble among one's schoolfellows; the birth and life of jelly-fish; and How to Set a Good Example, being an instalment of the History of Little Peter, the Boy Who Feared God, Kept His Hands Clean, and Was Always Cheerful and Respectful, and Fond of Chopping Wood for His Mother. The magazine also showed how to make hats, sailing boats, houses, and what-nots out of a plain sheet of paper—all of which I prac-

tised assiduously through a night of bug-biting sleeplessness. Best and worst of all was the five-page summary, in schoolmistress-English, of 'The Newcomes.' This had nothing in it but colourless statement of incident, and the sentiment of the book was churned into a welter of monstrous flabbiness. As a final insult "Adsum" was misspelt "Adsem" in the herewith gem with which the unliterary procureur completed his (or more probably her) prostitution of Thackeray's almost-masterpiece: "When the roll call of the pensioners was made the dying Colonel, hearing his name, lifted his poor old head, and said: 'Adsem!' Then he fell back dead. 'Adsem' is a Latin word signifying that a person is present"!! Yet the protest and anger inspired by this outrage were useful in taking my mind from its lonely bitterness; and I read the child's magazine version of 'The Newcomes' many times over, until its power to irritate was expended.

After a few more days my confinement became less solitary. The German major, whom I had already seen, visited me, with the Platzkommandant and his adjutant. He asked if I had any more complaints to make. I looked at the Platzkommandant, and said that the food was not only bad, but scarcely sufficient to keep a man alive. The fat Turk scowled his wickedest, but made no comment. The German major expressed regret, and promised that meals should be sent from the German Staff's mess.

Evidently the German General Staff in Palestine made a careful study of its own comfort. For the rest of my stay in Nazareth I fed better than I could have done, under war-time conditions, in any London hotel. Meat, fish, vegetables, and fruit of every kind, butter, sugar, pastries, good coffee, and wine, all were sent in profusion—to the great disgust of the Turkish officers, who were fed rather worse than the German privates.

The new diet was a very welcome change from bad bread and water, varied by thin soup. Sickness made me far from hungry, however, so that I found it impossible to eat many of the meals. The corporal of the guard, the sentry outside my door, and several of their friends would hang around in the corridor until the tray was taken from the room, then place their dirty hands in the dishes and snatch at pieces of meat or vegetable.

For me the food from the Germans was chiefly welcome in that it brought a good friend — the Dragoman who came with it. He was a Jew, originally from Salonika, with a long tongue-twisting name impossible to remember. I called him Jean Willi, French being our conversational medium. He was well-to-do, had been an official of the Ottoman Bank in Constantinople, and spoke seven languages. For the first two years of war he had kept out of the army by

means of *baksheesh.* Finally he was taken for service because he had offended an influential officer; but his knowledge of languages, together with various bribes placed in the right quarters, procured him the safe appointment of dragoman to the German Headquarters at Nazareth.

Three times a day — with breakfast, lunch, and dinner— Jean Willi came to see me. He tried to come oftener, but the Turks would not admit him. Everything I wanted he would move heaven and earth to get. He "obtained" a German soldier's cap for me, on discovering that I had no hat. He persuaded the German barber to bring my lunch one day, so that he might cut my hair. A comb, a toothbrush, soap, books, and a dozen other things were supplied by Jean Willi, who, having learned that my ready cash amounted to fourteen shillings, pretended that the articles had been sent by the German officers. Later I discovered this to be a benevolent untruth.

In the wayside fallings of a roving life I have met several very good Samaritans, but none other who did as much for me, under great difficulties, as Jean Willi. Before meeting him I was altogether broken in spirit, and with hopelessness filling my mind had actually begun to fear for my reason. He understood all this, and to the limit of his powers did his best to remedy it, well knowing that his actions would bring him the enmity and suspicions of the Turkish officers. His friendly conversation and his invariable kindness were splendid tonics, taken three times a day, at each visit.

When he was away my mind was prevented from slipping back into the stagnation of despair by the books he had smuggled into my room. The first of these was a German war novel—'Der Eiserne Mann'—procured from a Boche soldier. It purported to show how loyal were the Alsatians to the German Fatherland. It was untrue, stupidly sentimental, and often farcical; but, after all, so were most of the war novels published in England at that time. Then, in some dark recess of the house where he was billeted, he found a copy of 'Les Liasons Dangereuses'—an altogether extraordinary book to be salvaged from a little house in Nazareth. This was my first introduction to Barbéry d'Auréville, and joy and interest in his magnificent characterisation completed my rescue from the slough of despondency.

It was Jean Willi who first gave me an outline of Turkey's fantastic history during the war. He was never tired of asking why the British left the Dardanelles. They could have forced the way through with ease had they stayed a little longer, he said, as the Turks were at their last gasp, and, having no direct communication with the Central Empires, were nearly out of ammunition. Every one in Constantinople was expecting this to

happen, and most people hoped for it. The Greeks and other Christians had been ready to rise in revolt as soon as British ships entered the Sea of Marmora. All the gold had been transferred to Asia Minor, whither the Ministry intended to retire. This same story of the Turkish army being at its last gasp I heard, later, from scores of Turks, including officers who had actually fought on Gallipoli.

The sudden, savage onslaught of the Turks against their Christian subjects; the horrible character of the Armenian massacres; the murder of prominent Syrians; the deportation of Ottoman Greeks; the gradual starvation of the rotten old empire, whereby hundreds of thousands died of hunger while the Germans were sending trainload after trainload of foodstuffs from the country; the ruthless execution of all who dared to oppose Enver and Talaat; the amazing bribery and peculation; the hundreds of thousands of deserters, and the scores of thousands of brigands—all this was described in such vivid detail by Jean Willi that I could scarcely believe he could be relating fact. Two-thirds of the population, he said, were pro-Entente — not only the Christians and Arabs, but the very Turks themselves — although none could or would oppose the violence of the Young Turk party. As for himself, although he had never been to England, this Jew without a country claimed to have a frantic love of the English, which he could not explain, "like the love of a man for a mistress whom he respects"—his own words.

One day there arrived four Australian aviators who had been captured in the Jordan valley. R., the pilot of a Bristol Fighter, had landed behind the Turkish lines after his petrol-tank had been hit. Several months earlier he came to enemy earth on a B.E. under almost identical circumstances. Lieutenant Macnamara then won his V.C. by descending beside him, and, after his own Martinsyde had been destroyed, flying R.'s machine home, with R. in the passenger seat. On the occasion of R.'s second descent in Turkish territory H. had tried very pluckily to emulate Macnamara. He made a beautiful landing, and with R. and R.'s observer seated on the lower planes, one on each side of the pilot's cockpit, attempted to take his machine into the air with a load of four men. He might well have succeeded if R. had not jerked his body backward, to avoid a hot blast from the exhaust outlet, with the result that the equilibrium was upset and the craft swung round and hit a pile of stones. The four officers were able to burn their machines before being captured. A Turkish corporal tried to kill them off-hand, but the Germans prevented this, and finally they came to Nazareth.

Yet another British officer was at Nazareth in those days. W., a Yeomanry officer, had been for several months in hospital with severe wounds.

General Liman von Sanders, Commander-in-Chief of the Turco-German Army in Palestine, visited this hospital and promised the Turks that he would recapture Jerusalem and Jaffa within three months. Incidentally he gave the Iron Cross, 4th class, to every Turkish officer in the hospital, irrespective of whether he were wounded or merely in bed with a cold. W., whom the general presumed to be a Turk, received an Iron Cross like the other patients.

One morning the Australians and I were taken for interrogation to German headquarters. We agreed that our best plan would be to claim complete ignorance of everything connected with the war. The invariable answer of C., the first visitor to the private office of the Intelligence Officer—one Leutnant Santel—was "I don't know." When H., the second on the list, adopted the same tactics, Santel tried bluff.

"So!" he said softly, as if speaking to himself. "How happy am I that it is I and not another who makes the interrogation. Most people would order bad treatment for prisoners who refuse a correct reply. Even I may have to do thus. If the Pasha says to me, 'What have you learned from these prisoners?' and I reply, 'They say they know nothing,' he will be very angry and order severe measures."

"Uh-huh"—from H.

"Ah, sorry, I forgot you, my friend," said Santel with a start. . . . "Your aeroplanes are very useful in communicating with the Bedouins east of the Jordan, are they not?"

"I don't know."

"But I do know."

"Why ask me, then?"—the reply obvious.

"You don't know! You don't know! So! Please leave the room."

H. returned to us, and none of the remaining three were questioned that day. Leutnant Santel adopted a more subtle method next morning. With Oberleutnant von Heimburg ("brother of the famous submarine commander," as Santel introduced him), Staff Officer of the German Flying Corps at Palestine Headquarters, he came to the barracks and invited C., R., and me for a day's outing to Haifa, on condition that we gave parole until the return. We accepted and agreed; but while getting ready I remembered how, before my capture, it had been my duty to milk a German pilot of information while entertaining him, and warned the others not to be drawn into friendly talk about aeroplanes and operations.

It was as we expected. While we were driving to Afuleh aerodrome, for lunch in the Flying Corps Mess, von Heimburg and Santel refrained from any mention of the war; but at table they performed the usual trick of showing us photographs of British aerodromes and pilots, in the vain hope that on recognising them we would say something useful.

Next we travelled along a

narrow-gauge line to Haifa in a swaying truck, the motive power of which was a tractor propeller, driven by a 160 h.p. Mercèdes aero-engine. Once again, over tea at the Mount Carmel Hotel in Haifa, the Germans led the talk to the war, the Palestine operations, and aeroplanes; and once again we led it back to shoes and ships and sealing-wax and cabbages and kings. When Santel betrayed a desire for knowledge of the habits and exploits of Colonel Lawrence (who was performing such magnificent work as political officer with the Arab Army of the King of the Hedjaz), H. said he had never heard of him, but that in Australia he knew a fellow named Lawrence, who—Santel interrupted, and did not try to conceal his annoyance. Then he began talking about Miss Gertrude Bell (an Englishwoman who has rendered brilliant political services among the Mesopotamian Arabs). This time we were able to say with truth that we knew nothing of the matter, although Santel continued to discuss and libel the lady, whom the Germans were going to shoot, he said. Von Heimburg then praised the British Air Service, with many a pause that invited comment from us. The pauses remained empty, and we managed to exclude the war by pretending to compare, painstakingly and assiduously, the respective merits of English and Australian girls.

After tea, while bathing in the Mediterranean with the Germans, we saw a strange sight along the sea front. A line of not less than thirty fishing craft were left stranded on the beach, with great holes knocked in their sides, so that they might not be refloated. This drastic prevention of the use of small vessels, according to Santel, was because many Greek and Syrian fishermen had spied for the British or deserted to Cyprus.

"The same thing has happened over there," he added, pointing across the bay toward Acre, "and at other places too—Tyre, Sidon, Beyrouth, and every port on the coast-lines of Syria and Asia Minor."

We noticed, however, that three boats were out at sea, presumably fishing for the tables of officers and officials.

"If we could get back here some night," whispered C., as we dressed, "we might collar one of those three boats, tow it out to sea by swimming, and sail to Jaffa." This revived my hopes of escape for the first time since the fiasco at Tul-Keran.

"Thank you a thousand times," I said when von Heimburg and Santel left us at Nazareth. "It has been a most enjoyable day."

They agreed, without showing enthusiasm.

"But not a very successful one for you, I'm afraid," I added.

They were quiet for a minute, and then both laughed.

"So! You were prepared," said Santel. "Well, I shan't try again."

Neither Santel nor anybody

else tried again to interrogate us at Nazareth. Two days later we were told to prepare for a journey to Damascus. C. had been discussing the chances of getting to the coast and stealing a boat; and when Jean Willi paid me a farewell visit, I asked him if a journey from Damascus to the coast would be difficult.

"Very difficult, indeed, under the conditions of which you are thinking." Then, after a pause, "but I will tell you something interesting, since you will probably be kept in Damascus for about a fortnight. The Armenians run secret caravans from Damascus to Akaba."

"Thank you; that's very interesting indeed." And it was, for Akaba, at the north-eastern extremity of the Red Sea, was a base of the Arab Army co-operating with the British.

Jean Willi would not listen to thanks as he said his adieus. I gave him my London address, in the sincere hope of being able to pay him back in part after the war, for he intended to settle in England.

I left Nazareth under much better conditions than I entered it. Accompanied by an Arab pseudo-spy, I had arrived half-crazed by weakness, pain, and disaster, with a damaged leg and a swollen face, and possessing neither hope nor a hat. I was leaving it in the company of fellow-officers, with my mind and leg and face normal again, and having not only a German hat, but renewed hopes of escape, summed up in Jean Willi's hint: "The Armenians run secret caravans from Damascus to Akaba."

(To be continued.)

SIMON.

BY J. STORER CLOUSTON.

X. THE LETTER.

It was a few days later that Cicely looked up from the local paper she was reading and asked—

"Who was George Rattar?"

Sir Reginald laid down his book and looked at her in some surprise.

"George Rattar? What do you know about him?"

"I see the announcement of his death. 'Son of the late John Simon Rattar,' he's called."

"That's silent Simon's brother!" exclaimed Sir Reginald. "Where did he die?"

"In New York, it says."

Sir Reginald turned to his wife.

"We can hardly send our sympathies to Simon on this bereavement!"

"No," she said significantly. "I suppose congratulations would be more appropriate."

The baronet took the paper from Cicely and studied it himself.

"Died about a fortnight ago, I see," he observed. "I wonder whether Simon put this announcement in himself, or whether brother George arranged it in his will? It would be quite like the fellow to have this posthumous wipe at Simon. George had a certain sense of humour—which Simon lacks. And there was certainly no love lost between them!"

"Why should it annoy Mr Rattar?" asked Cicely.

"Because brother George was not a member of his family he would care to be reminded of. Though, on the other hand, Simon is as hard as whinstone and has as much sentiment as this teapot, and he may have put the notice in himself simply to show the world he was rid of the fellow."

"What was George Rattar, then?" inquired Cicely.

"He was once Simon Rattar's partner, wasn't he, Reginald?" said Lady Cromarty. "And then he swindled him, didn't he?"

"Swindled several other people as well," said Sir Reginald. "Myself included. However, the thing was hushed up, and brother George disappeared. Then he took to forgery on his own account, and among other people's signatures he imitated with remarkable success was Simon's. This let old Simon in for it again, and there was no hushing it up a second time. Simon gave evidence against him without mercy, and since then George has been His Majesty's guest for a number of years. So if you meet Mr Simon Rattar, Cicely, you'd better not tell

him how sorry you are to hear of poor George's decease!"

"I wish I could remember him more distinctly," said Lady Cromarty. "I'm afraid I always mix him up with our friend Mr Simon."

"It's little wonder," her husband replied. "They were twins. George was the one with a moustache; one knew them apart by that. Extraordinary thing, it has always seemed to me, that their natures should have been so different."

"Perhaps," suggested Cicely compassionately, with her serious air, "it was only that George was tempted."

Sir Reginald laughed heartily.

"You little cynic!" he cried. "You mean to insinuate that if you tempted Simon, he'd be as bad a hat as his brother?"

"Oh no!" cried Cicely. "I meant——"

"Tempt him and see!" chuckled the baronet. "And we'll have a little bet on the result!" He was glancing at the paper as he laughed, and now he suddenly stopped laughing and exclaimed, "Hullo! Here's a much more serious loss for our friend. Would you like to earn one pound, Cicely?"

"Very much," said she.

"Well, then, if you search the road very carefully between Mr Simon Rattar's residence and his office you may find his signet ring and obtain the advertised, and I may say princely, reward of one pound."

"Only a pound!" exclaimed Lady Cromarty, "for that handsome old ring of his?"

"If he had offered a penny more, I should have taken my business out of his hands!" laughed Sir Reginald. "It would have meant that Silent Simon wasn't himself any longer. A pound is exactly his figure: a respectable sum, but not extravagant."

"What day did he lose it?" asked Cicely.

"The advertisement doesn't say."

"He wasn't wearing it——" Cicely pulled herself up sharply.

"When?" asked Lady Cromarty.

"Where can I have seen him last?" wondered Cicely with an innocent air.

"Not for two or three weeks certainly," said Lady Cromarty decisively. "And he can't have lost it then if this advertisement is only just put in."

"No, of course not," Cicely agreed.

"Well," said Sir Reginald, "he'll miss his ring more than his brother! And remember, Cicely, you get a pound for finding the ring, and you win a pair of gloves if you can tempt Simon to stray from the paths of honesty and virtue! By Jingo, I'll give you the gloves if you can even make him tell a good sporting lie!"

When the good baronet was in this humour no man could excel him in geniality, and, to do him justice, a kindly temper and hearty spirits were the rule with him six days out of seven. On the other hand, he was easily ruffled, and his tempers were hot while they lasted. Upon the very next

morning there arose on the horizon a little cloud—a cloud that seemed at the moment the merest fleck of vapour—which upset him, his family thought, quite unduly.

It took the form of a business letter from Mr Simon Rattar—a letter on the surface perfectly innocuous and ormally polite. Yet, Sir Reginald seemed considerably disturbed.

"Damn the man!" he exclaimed as he cast it on the breakfast table.

"Reggie!" expostulated his wife gently. "What's the matter?"

"Matter?" snapped her husband; "Simon Rattar has the impudence to tell me he is letting the farm of Castleknowe to that fellow Shearer after all!"

"But why not? You meant to some time ago, I know."

"Some time ago, certainly. But I had a long talk with Simon ten days ago, and told him what I'd heard about Shearer, and said I wouldn't have the fellow on my property at any price. I don't believe the man is solvent, in the first place; and in the second place he's a socialistic, quarrelsome, mischievous fellow!"

"And what did Mr Rattar think?"

"He tried to make some allowances for the man, but in the end, when he saw I had made up my mind, he professed to agree with me, and said he would look out for another tenant. Now he tells me that the matter is settled as per my instructions of the 8th. That's weeks ago, and not a word does he say about our conversation cancelling the whole instructions!"

"Then Shearer gets the farm?"

"No, he doesn't! I'm dashed if he does! I shall send Mr Simon a letter that will make him sit up! He's got to alter the arrangement somehow."

He turned to Malcolm and added—

"When your time comes, Malcolm, beware of having a factor who has run the place so long that he thinks it's his own property! By Gad, I'm going to tell him a bit of my mind!"

During the rest of breakfast he glanced at the letter once or twice, and each time his brows contracted; but he said nothing more in presence of Cicely and Malcolm. After he had left the dining-room, however, Lady Cromarty followed him and said—

"Don't be too hasty with Mr Rattar, Reggie! After all, the talk may have slipped his memory."

"Slipped his memory? If you had heard it, Margaret, you'd know better. I was a bit cross with him for a minute or two then, which I hardly ever am, and that alone would make him remember it, one would think. We talked for over an hour on the business, and the upshot was clear and final. No, no, he has got a bit above himself, and wants a touch of the curb."

"What are you going to do?" she asked.

"I'm going to send in a note by car, and tell him to come out and see me about the business at once."

"Let me see the letter before you send it, Reggie."

He seemed to growl assent, but when she next saw him the letter had gone; and from the baronet's somewhat crusty explanation, she suspected that it was a little sharper than he knew she would have approved.

When the car returned his annoyance was increased again for a space. Mr Rattar had sent a brief reply that he was too busy to come out that afternoon, but he would call on Sir Reginald in the morning. For a time this answer kept Sir Reginald in a state of renewed irritation, and then his natural good-humour began to prevail, till by dinner-time he was quite calm again, and after dinner in as genial humour as he had been in the day before.

He played a game of pyramids with Cicely and Malcolm in the billiard-room, and then he and Cicely joined Lady Cromarty in the drawing-room, while the young author went up to his room to work, he declared. He had a large bedroom furnished half as a sitting-room, where he retired each night to compose his masterpieces as soon as it became impossible to enjoy Miss Farmond's company without having to share it in the drawing-room with his host and hostess. At least, that was the explanation of his procedure given by Lady Cromarty, whose eye was never more critical than when it studied her husband's kinsman and heir.

Lady Cromarty's eye was not uncritical also of Cicely at times, but to-night she was so relieved to see how Sir Reginald's temper improved under her smiles and half-shy glances that she let her stay up later than usual. Then when she and the girl went up to bed, she asked her husband if he would be late.

"The magazines came this morning," said he; "I'd better sleep in my dressing-room."

The baronet was apt to sit up late when he had anything to read that held his fancy, and the procedure of sleeping in his dressing-room was commonly followed then.

He bade them good-night and went off towards the library, and a few minutes later, as they were going upstairs, they heard the library door shut.

When they came to Lady Cromarty's room, Cicely said good-night to her hostess and turned down the passage that led to her own bedroom. A door opened quietly as she passed, and a voice whispered—

"Cicely!"

She stopped and regarded the young author with a reproving eye.

"Is anything the matter?" she asked.

"I just wanted to speak to you!" he pleaded.

"Now, Malcolm," she said severely, "you know quite

well that Lady Cromarty trusts us *not* to do this sort of thing!"

"She's in her room, isn't she?"

"What does that matter?"

"And where's Sir Reginald?"

"Still in the library."

"Sitting up late?"

"Yes, but that doesn't matter either. Good-night!"

"Wait just one minute, Cicely! Come into my room—I won't shut the door!"

"Certainly not!" she said emphatically.

"Well then, don't speak so loudly! I must confide in you, Cicely; I'm getting desperate. My position is really serious. Something's got to happen! If you would only give me your sympathy——"

"I thought you were writing," she interrupted.

"I've been trying to, but ——"

"Well, write all this down and read it me to-morrow," she smiled. "Good-night!"

"The blame be on your head!" began the author dramatically, but the slim figure was already moving away, throwing him a parting smile that seemed to wound his sensitive soul afresh.

XI. NEWS.

Even in that scattered countryside of long distances by windy roads, with scarcely ever a village as a focus for gossip, news flew fast. The next morning Ned Cromarty had set out with his gun towards a certain snipe marsh, but while he was still on the highroad he met a man on a bicycle. The man had heard strange news and stopped to pass it on, and the next moment Ned was hurrying as fast as his long legs could take him back to the castle.

He saw his sister only for a moment.

"Lilian!" he cried; and the sound of his voice made her start and stare at him. "There's a story that Sir Reginald was murdered last night."

"Murdered?" she repeated in a low incredulous voice.

"Ridiculous, Ned! Who told you?"

"I only know the man by sight, but he seemed to believe it right enough."

"But how—who did it?"

Her brother shook his head.

"Don't know. He couldn't tell me. My God, I hope it's not true! I'm off to see."

A few minutes later he was driving his mare headlong for his kinsman's house. It had begun to rain by this time, and the mournful wreaths of vapour that swept over the bare, late autumnal country and drove in fine drops against his face, sent his spirits down ever lower as the mare splashed her way along the empty miles of road. The melancholy thrumming of the telegraph wires droned by his side all the while, and as this dirge waxed for the moment as they passed

each post, his eye would glance grimly at those gaunt poles. Very suitable and handy for a certain purpose, they struck him—if by any possibility this tale were true.

He knew the worst when he saw Bisset at the door.

"Thank God, you've come, sir," said the butler devoutly. "The master would have expected it of you."

"How did it happen? What does it mean? Do you mean to say it's actually *true?*"

Bisset shook his head sombrely.

"Ower true," said he. "But as to how it happened, come in to the library, sir. It was in his ain library he was killed! The Fiscal and Superintendent is there now, and we've been going into the circumstantial evidence. Most extraordinary mystery, sir — most extraordinary!"

In the library they found Simon Rattar and Superintendent Sutherland. The Superintendent was a big, burly, red-moustached man; his face a certificate of honesty, but hardly of the intellectual type. Ned looked round him apprehensively for something else, but Bisset said—

"We've taken him upstairs, sir."

For a moment as he looked round that spacious comfortable room with its long bookcases and easy-chairs, and on the tables and mantelpiece a hundred little mementos of its late owner, the laird of Stanesland was unable to speak a word, and the others respected his silence. Then he pulled himself together sharply and asked—

"How did it happen? Tell me all about it!"

Perhaps there might have been for a moment in Simon's eye a hint that this demand was irregular, but the Superintendent evidently took no exception to the intrusion. Besides being a considerable local magnate and a kinsman of the dead baronet, Stanesland had a forcible personality that stood no gainsaying.

"Well, sir," said the Superintendent, "Mr Rattar could perhaps explain best."

"Explain yourself, Sutherland," said Simon briefly.

The Superintendent pointed to a spot on the carpet a few paces from the door.

"We found Sir Reginald lying there," he said. "His skull had been fairly cracked, just over the right eye, sir. The blow would have been enough to kill him, I'd think myself, but there were marks in his neck, too, seeming to show that the murderer had strangled him afterwards to make sure. However, we'll be having the medical evidence soon. But there's no doubt that was the way of it, and Mr Rattar agrees with me."

The lawyer merely nodded.

"What was it done with?"

The Superintendent pursed his lips and shook his head.

"That's one of the mysterious things in the case, sir. There's no sign of any weapon in the room. The fire-irons are far too light. But it was an unco heavy blow. There was little bleed-

ing, but the skull was fair cracked."

"Was anything stolen?"

"That's another mystery, sir. Nothing was stolen anywhere in the house, and there was no papers in a mess like, or anything."

"When was he found?" asked Ned.

"Seven-fifty this morning, sir," said Bisset. "The housemaid, finding the door lockit, came to me. I knew the dining-room key fitted this door too, so I opened it—and there he lay."

"All night, without any one knowing he hadn't gone to bed?"

"That's the unfortunate thing, sir," said the Superintendent. "It seems that Sir Reginald had arranged to sleep in his dressing-room as he was going to be sitting up late reading."

"Murderer must have known that," put in Simon.

"Almost looks like it," agreed the Superintendent.

"And nobody in the house heard or saw anything?"

"Nobody, sir," said the Superintendent.

"That's their statement," added the lawyer in his driest voice.

"Was anybody sitting up late?"

"Nobody admits it," said the lawyer, again very drily.

"Thirteen," said Bisset softly.

They turned towards him, but it seemed that he was talking to himself. He was, in fact, quietly taking measurements with a tape.

"Go on," said Cromarty briefly.

"Well, sir," said the Superintendent. "The body was found near the door, as I was pointing out; but it's a funny thing that a small table had been upset apparently, and Bisset tells us that that table stood near the window."

"Humph," grunted Simon sceptically.

"I'm quite sure of it, Mr Rattar," said Bisset confidently, looking round from his work of measurement.

"No positive proof it was upset," said the lawyer.

"Did you find it upset?" asked Ned.

The lawyer shook his head emphatically and significantly, and the Superintendent agreed.

"No, it was standing just where it is now near the wall."

"Then why do you think it was upset?"

"I picked up yon bits of sealing-wax and yon piece india-rubber," said Bisset, looking round again. "I know they were on the wee table yesterday, and I found them under the curtain in the morning, and the table moved over to the wall. It follows that the table has been cowpit and then set up again in another place, and the other things on it put back. Is that not a fair deduction, sir?"

Ned nodded thoughtfully.

"Seems to me so," he said.

"It seems likely enough," the Superintendent also agreed. "And if that's the

case there would seem to have been some kind of ongoings near the window."

The Procurator-Fiscal still seemed unconvinced.

"Nothing to go on. No proper evidence. It leads nowhere definitely," he said.

"Well now," continued the Superintendent, "the question is—how did the murderer get into the room? The door was found locked and the key had been taken away, so whether he had locked it from the inside or the outside we can't tell. There's small chance of finding the key, I doubt, for a key's a thing easily hidden away."

"So he might have come in by the door and then left by the door and locked it after him," said Ned. "Or he might have come in by the window, locked the door, and gone out by the window. Or he might have come in by the window and gone out by the door, locking it after him. Those are all the chances, aren't they?"

"Indeed, that seems to be them all," said the Superintendent with a note of admiration for this clear exposition that seemed to indicate he was better himself at details than deductions.

"And now what about the window? Was that open or shut, or what?"

"Shut, but not snibbed, sir."

Ned turned to Bisset.

"Did Sir Reginald ever forget to snib the windows, supposing one happened to be open?"

"Practically never, sir."

"Last thing before he left the room, I suppose?" said the lawyer.

The butler hesitated.

"I suppose so, sir," he admitted; "but of course I was never here to see."

"Exactly!" said Simon. "Therefore one can draw no conclusions as to whether the window had been standing all the time just as it is now, or whether it had been opened and shut again from the outside, seeing that Sir Reginald was presumably killed before his usual time for looking to the windows."

"Wait a bit!" said Ned. "I was assuming a window had been open. But were the windows fastened before Sir Reginald came in to sit here last thing?"

"Certainly they were that," said the butler emphatically.

"It was a mild night, he might have opened one himself," replied the Procurator-Fiscal. "Or supposing the man had come in and left again by the door, what's more likely than that he unsnibbed the window to make people think he had come that way?"

"He would surely have left it wide open," objected Ned.

"Might have thought that too obvious," replied the lawyer, "or might have been afraid of the noise. Unsnibbing would be quite enough to suggest entry that way."

Ned turned his keen eye hard on him.

"What's your own theory, then?"

"I've none," grunted Simon. "No definite evidence one way or the other. Mere guesses are no use."

Ned walked to the window and looked at it carefully. Then he threw it up and looked out into the garden.

"Of course you've looked for footsteps underneath?" he asked.

"Naturally," said Simon. "But it's a hard gravel path and grass beyond. One could fancy one saw traces, but no definite evidence."

The window was one of three together, with stone mullions between. They were long windows reaching down nearly to the level of the floor, so that entrance that way was extremely easy if one of them was open. Cromarty got out and stood on the sill, examining the middle sash.

Simon regarded him with a curious caustic look for a moment in his eye.

"Looking for finger-marks?" he inquired.

"Yes," said Ned. "Did you look for them?"

For a single instant the Procurator-Fiscal seemed a little taken aback. Then he grunted with a half laugh—

"Don't believe much in them."

"Experienced criminals, that's been convicted before, frequently wears gloves for to prevent their finger-prints being spotted," said the learned Bisset.

Mr Rattar shot him a quick ambiguous glance, and then his eyes assumed their ordinary cold look, and he said—

"No evidence anybody ever opened that window from the outside. If they had, Sir Reginald would have heard them."

"Well," said Ned, getting back into the room, "there are no finger-marks anyhow."

"The body being found near the door certainly seems to be in favour of Mr Rattar's opinion," observed the Superintendent.

"I thought Mr Rattar had formed no opinion yet," said Cromarty.

"No more I have," grunted the lawyer.

The Superintendent looked a trifle perplexed.

"Before Mr Cromarty had come in, sir, I understood you for to say everything pointed to the man having come in by the door and hit Sir Reginald on the head, as he came to see who it was when he heard him outside."

"I merely suggested that," said Simon rather sharply. "It fits the facts, but there's no definite evidence yet."

Ned Cromarty had turned, and was frowning out of the window. Now he wheeled quickly, and exclaimed—

"If the murderer came in through the window while Sir Reginald was in the room, either the window was standing open, or Sir Reginald opened it for him! Did Sir Reginald ever sit with his window open late at night at this time of year?"

"Never once, sir," said Bisset confidently. "He likit fresh air outside fine, but never kept his windies open much,

unless the weather was vera propitious."

"Then," said Ned, "why should Sir Reginald have opened the window of his own accord to a stranger at the dead of night?"

"Exactly!" said Mr Rattar. "Thing seems absurd. He'd never do it."

"That's my own opinion likewise, sir," put in Bisset.

"It's only common sense," added the Superintendent.

"Then how came the window to be unfastened?" demanded Ned.

"I've suggested a reason," said Simon.

"As a blind? Sounds to me damned thin."

Simon Rattar turned away from him with an air that suggested that he thought it time to indicate distinctly that he was in charge of the case, and not the laird of Stanesland.

"That's all we can do just now, Sutherland," he said. "No use disturbing the household any longer at present."

Cromarty stepped up to him suddenly and asked—

"Tell me honestly! Do you suspect anybody?"

Simon shook his head decidedly.

"No sufficient evidence yet. Good-morning, Mr Cromarty."

Ned was following him to the door, his lips compressed and his eyes on the floor, when Bisset touched his arm and beckoned him back.

"Excuse me, sir," said he, "but could you not manage just to stop on for a wee bit yet?"

Ned hesitated.

"They won't be wanting visitors, Bisset."

"They needn't know if you don't want them to, sir. Lady Cromarty is shut up in her room, and the others are keeping out of the way. If you wouldn't mind my giving you a little cold luncheon in my sitting-room, sir, I'd like to have your help. I'm making a few sma' bits of investigation on my own. You're one of the family, sir, and I know you'll be wanting to find out who killed the master."

Ned's eye flashed suddenly.

"By God, I'll never rest in this world or the next till I do! All right, I'll wait for a bit."

XII. CICELY.

Ned Cromarty waited in the hall while Bisset went to the door with the Procurator-Fiscal and Superintendent of Police. As he stood there in the darkened silence of the house, there came to his ears for an instant the faint sound of a voice, and it seemed to be a woman's. With that the current of his thoughts seemed to change, and when Bisset returned he asked, though with marked hesitation—

"Do you think, Bisset, I could do anything for any of them, Mr Malcolm Cromarty, or—er—Miss Farmond?"

Bisset considered the point judicially. It was clear he felt that the management of the household was in his hands now.

"I am sure Miss Farmond would be pleased, sir—poor young lady!"

"Do you really think so?" said Ned, and his manner brightened visibly. "Well, if she won't mind——"

"I think if you come this way, sir, you will find her with Sir Malcolm."

"*Sir* Malcolm!" exclaimed Ned. "My God, so he is!"

To himself he added—

"And she will soon be Lady Cromarty!"

But the thought did not seem to exhilarate him.

He was led towards the billiard-room, an addition to the house which lay rather apart. The door was half open, and through it he could see that the blinds had been drawn down, and he could hear a murmur of voices.

"They are in there, sir," said Bisset, and he left him.

As Ned Cromarty entered he caught the words spoken by the new baronet—

"My dear Cicely, I depend on your sympathy."

He broke off as he heard a footstep, and seemed to move a little apart from the chair where Cicely was sitting.

The two young people greeted their visitor; Cicely, in a voice so low that it was scarcely audible, but with a smile that seemed, he thought, to welcome him—Sir Malcolm, with a tragic solemnity, which no doubt was quite appropriate to a bereaved baronet. The appearance of a third party seemed, however, to afford him no particular gratification, and after exchanging a sentence or two, he begged, in a very serious tone, to be excused, and retired, walking softly and mournfully. Ned noticed then that his face was extraordinarily pale and his eye disturbed.

"I was afraid of disturbing you," said Ned. He was embarrassed, a rare condition with him, which, when it did afflict him, resulted in an impression of intimidating truculence.

Cicely seemed to shrink a little, and he resolved to leave instantly.

"Oh no!" she said shyly.

"I only wanted to say that if I could do anything for you—well, you've only to let me know."

"It's awfully kind of you," she murmured.

There was something so evidently sincere in this murmur that his embarrassment forthwith left him.

"Thank Heaven!" he said after his outspoken habit. "I was afraid I was putting my foot in it. But if you really don't mind my seeing you for a minute or two, I'd just like to say——"

He broke off abruptly, and she looked up at him questioningly.

"Dash it, I can't say it, Miss Farmond! But you know, don't you?"

She murmured something again, and though he could not quite hear what it was,

he knew she understood and appreciated.

Leaning against the corner of the shrouded billiard-table, with the blinds down and this pale slip of a girl in deep mourning sitting in a basket-chair in the dim light, he began suddenly to realise the tragedy.

"I've been too stunned till now to grasp what's happened," he said in a moment. "Our best friend gone, Miss Farmond!"

He had said exactly the right thing now.

"He certainly was mine!" she said.

"And mine too. We may live to be a brace of Methuselahs, but I guess we'll never see his like again!"

His odd phrase made her smile for a moment despite herself. It passed swiftly, and she said—

"*I* can't believe it yet."

Again there was silence, and then he said abruptly—

"It's little wonder you can't believe it! The thing is so extraordinary. It's incredible! A man without an enemy in the world—no robbery attempted—sitting in his own library—in just about the most peaceful and out-of-the-way county in Scotland—not a sound heard by anybody—not a reason that one can possibly imagine—and yet murdered!"

"But it must have been a robber, surely!"

"Why didn't he rob something, then?"

"But how else——?"

"How indeed! You've not a suspicion of any one yourself, Miss Farmond? Say it right out if you have. We don't lynch here. At least," he corrected himself as he recalled the telegraph posts, "it hasn't been done yet."

"I *can't* suspect any one!" she said earnestly. "I never met any one in my life that I could possibly imagine doing such a thing!"

"No," he said, "I guess our experiences have been pretty different. I've met lots, but then there are none of those boys here. Who is there in this place?"

He paused and stared into space.

"It must have been a tramp—some one who doesn't belong here!"

"I was trying to think whether there are any lunatics about," he said in a moment. "But there aren't any."

There was silence for some minutes. He was thinking; she never moved. Then he heard a sound, and, looking down, saw that she had her handkerchief in her hand. He had nearly bent over her before he remembered Sir Malcolm, and at the recollection he said abruptly—

"Well, I've disturbed you too long. If I can do anything—anything whatever—you'll let me know, won't you?"

"You are very very kind," she murmured, and a note in her voice nearly made him forget the new baronet. In fact, he had to retire rather quickly to be sure of himself.

The efficiency of James Bisset was manifest at every

conjuncture. Businesslike and brisk, he appeared from somewhere as Cromarty reached the hall, and led him from the front regions to the butler's sitting-room.

"I will bring your lunch in a moment, sir," he murmured, and vanished briskly.

The room looked out on a courtyard at the back, and through the window Ned could see against the opposite buildings the rain driving in clouds. In the court the wind was eddying, and beneath some door he could hear it drone insistently. Though the toughest of men, he shivered a little and drew up a wicker chair close in front of the fire.

"It's incredible!" he murmured, and as he stared at the flames this thought seemed to haunt him all the time.

Bisset laid the table and another hour passed. Ned ate a little lunch and then smoked and stared at the fire while the wind droned and blustered without ceasing, and occasionally a cross gust sent the raindrops softly pattering on the panes.

"I'm damned if I see a thing!" he suddenly exclaimed half aloud, and jumped to his feet.

Before he had time to start for the door, Bisset's mysterious efficiency was made manifest again. Precisely as he was wanted, he appeared, and this time it was clear that his own efforts had not been altogether fruitless. He had in fact an air of even greater complacency than usual.

"I have arrived at certain conclusions, sir," he announced.

XIII. THE DEDUCTIVE PROCESS.

Bisset laid on the table a sheet of note-paper.

"Here," said he, "is a kin' of bit sketch-plan of the library. Observing this plan attentively, sir," he continued, "you will notice two crosses, marked A and B. A is where yon wee table was standing—no' the place against the wall where it was standing this morning, but where it was standing before it was knocked over last night. B is where the corp was found. You follow that, sir?"

Ned nodded.

"I follow," said he.

"Now, the principle in a' these cases of crime and detection," resumed the philosopher, assuming his lecturer's air, "is noticing such sma' points of detail as escape the eye of the ordinar' observer, taking full and accurate measurements, making a plan with the principal sites carefully markit, and drawing, as it were, logical conclusions. Applying this method now to the present instance, Mr Cromarty, the first point to observe is that the room is twenty-six feet long, measured from the windie, which is a bit recessed or set back, as it were, to the other end of the apartment. Half of 26 is 13, and if you take the half-way line and

draw approximate perpendiculars to about where the table was standing and to as near as one can remember where the middle of the corp roughly was lying, you get exactly six feet ten and five-eighth inches in both cases."

"An approximate perpendicular to roughly about these places gives this exact measurement?" repeated Cromarty gravely. "Well, what next?"

"Well, sir, I'll not insist too much on the coincidence, but it seems to me vera remarkable. But the two significant features of this case seem to me yon table being upset over by the windie and the corp being found over by the door."

"You're talking horse sense now," murmured Ned.

"Now, yon table was upset by Sir Reginald falling on it!"

Ned looked at him keenly.

"How do you know?"

"Because one of the legs was broken clean off!"

"What, when we saw it this morning?"

"We had none of us noticed it then, sir; but I've had a look at it since, and there's one leg broken fair off at the top. The break was half in the socket, as it were, leaving a kind of spike, and if you stick that into the socket you can make the table look as good as new. It's all right, in fac', until you try to move it, and then of course the leg just drops out."

"And it wasn't like that yesterday?"

"I happened to move it myself not so long before Sir Reginald came into the room, and that's how I know for certain where it was standing and that it wasn't broken. And yon wee light tables dinna lose their legs just with being cowped, supposing there was nothing else than that to smash them. No, sir, it was poor Sir Reginald falling on top of it that smashed yon leg."

"Then he was certainly struck down near the window!"

"Well, we'll see that in a minute. It's no' in reason, Mr Cromarty, to suppose he deliberately opened the windie to let his ain murderer in. And it's a' just stuff and nonsense to suggest Sir Reginald was sitting on a winter's night—or next door to winter onyhow—with his windie wide open. I'm too well acquaint with his habits to believe that for a minute. And it's impossible the man can have opened a snibbed windie and got in, with some one sitting in the room, and no alarm given. So it's perfectly certain the man must have come in at the door. That's a fair deduction, is it not, sir?"

Ned Cromarty frowned into space in silence. When he spoke it seemed to be as much to himself as to Bisset.

"How did the window get unsnibbed? Everything beats me, but that beats me fairly."

"Well, sir, Mr Rattar may no' be just exac'ly as intellectual as me and you, but I think there's maybe something in his idea it was done to put us off the scent."

"Possibly—but it strikes me as a derned feeble dodge.

However, what's your next conclusion?"

"My next conclusion is, sir, that Simon Rattar may not be so vera far wrong either about Sir Reginald hearing some one at the door and starting to see who it was. Then —bang!—the door would suddenly open, and afore he'd time to speak, the man had given him a bat on the heid that finished him."

"And where does the table come in?"

"Well, my explanation is just this, that Sir Reginald suspected something and took the wee table as a kind of weapon."

"Rot!" said Ned ruthlessly. "You think he left the fireplace and went round by the window to fetch such a useless weapon as that?"

James Bisset was not easily damped.

"That's only a possibility, sir. Excluding that, what must have happened? For that's the way, Mr Cromarty, to get at the fac's; you just exclude what's not possible, and what remains is the truth. If you'd read——"

"Well, come on. What's your theory now?"

"Just that Sir Reginald backed away from the door with the man after him, till he got to the table. And then down went him and the table together."

"And why didn't he cry out or raise the alarm in some way while he was backing away?"

"God, but that fits into my other deductions fine!" cried Bisset. "I hadna thought of that. Just wait, sir, till you see how the case is going to hang together in a minute."

"But how did Sir Reginald's body come to be lying near the door?"

The philosopher seemed to be inspired afresh.

"The man clearly meant to take it away and hide it somewhere—that'll be just it! And then he found it ower heavy and decided to leave it after all."

"And who was this man?"

"That's precisely where proper principles, Mr Cromarty, lead to a number of vera interesting and instructive discoveries, and I think ye'll see, sir, that the noose is on the road to his neck already. I've not got the actual man, mind! In fac' I've no idea who he is, but I can tell you a good few things about him—enough, in fac', to make escape practically impossible. In the first place, he was one well acquaint with the ways of the house. Is that not a fair deduction, sir?"

"Sure!" said Ned. "I've put my bottom dollar on that already."

"He came from inside this house and not outside it. How long he'd been in the house, that I cannot say; but my own deductions are, he'd been in the house waiting for his chance for a good while before the master heard him at yon door. Is that not a fair deduction too, sir?"

"It's possible," said Ned, though not with great conviction.

"And now here's a point

that accounts for Sir Reginald giving no alarm—Sir Reginald knew the man and couldna believe he meant mischief!"

Ned looked at him quickly and curiously.

"Well?" said he.

"Is that not a fair deduction, Mr Cromarty?"

"Seems to fill the bill."

"And now, here's a few personal details. Yon man was a fair active strong man to have dealt with the master the way he did. But he was not strong enough to carry off the corp like a sack of potatoes. He was no' a great muckle big giant, that's to say. And finally, calculating from the distance the body was from the door and the number of steps he would be likely to take to the door, and sae arriving at his stride and deducing his height accordingly, he'd be as near as may be five feet nine inches tall. Now, sir, me and you ought to get him with a' that known!"

Ned Cromarty looked at him with a curious gleam in his eye.

"What's your own height, Bisset?" he inquired.

"Five feet nine inches," said the reasoner promptly, and then suddenly his mouth fell open but his voice ceased.

"And now," pursued Ned with a grimly humorous look, "can you not think of a man just that height, pretty hefty but not a giant, who was certainly in the house last night, who knew all the ways of it, and who would never have been suspected by Sir Reginald of meaning mischief?"

"God!" exclaimed the unfortunate reasoner, "I've proved it was mysel'!"

"Well, and what shall I do—string you up now or hand you over to the police?"

"But, Mr Cromarty—you don't believe that's right, surely?"

Tragic though the occasion was, Ned could not refrain from one brief laugh. And then his face set hard again and he said—

"No, Bisset, I do not believe it was you. In fact, I wouldn't believe it was you if you confessed to it. But I'd advise you not to go spreading your deductions abroad! Deduction's a game that wants a bit more practice than you or I have had."

It is possible that James Bisset had never looked quite so crestfallen in his life.

"Then that's all nonsense I've been talking, sir?" he said lugubriously.

"No," said Ned emphatically, "I'll not say that either. You've brought out some good points: that broken table, the place the body was found, the possible reason why Sir Reginald gave no alarm—seems to me those have something to them. But what they mean—what to conclude—we're as far off that, Bisset, as ever!"

The philosopher's self-esteem was evidently returning as fast as it had gone.

"Then you wouldn't think there would be any harm, sir, in my continuing my investigations?"

"On your present lines the only harm is likely to be to

yourself. Keep at it — but don't hang yourself accidentally. And let me know if you discover anything else—mind that."

"I'll mind on it, no fears, Mr Cromarty!"

Ned left him with an expression on his countenance which indicated that the deductive process had already been resumed.

Till he arrived at his own door the laird of Stanesland was unconscious of a single incident of his drive home. All the way his eye stared straight into space. Sometimes a gleam would light it for an instant, and then he would shake his head and the gleam would fade away.

"I can see neither a damned head nor a damned tail to it!" he said to himself as he alighted.

XIV. THE QUESTION OF MOTIVE.

Two days later Mr Ison entered Mr Simon Rattar's room and informed him that Mr Cromarty of Stanesland wished to see him on particular business. The lawyer was busy, and this interruption seemed for the moment distinctly unwelcome. Then he grunted.

"Show him in."

In the minute or two that passed before the laird's entrance, Simon seemed to be thinking intently, and finally to come to a decision which, to judge from his reception of his client, was on rather different lines from his first thoughts when Mr Cromarty's name was announced. To describe Simon Rattar at any time as genial would be an exaggeration, but he showed his nearest approach to geniality as he bade his client good-morning.

"Sorry to interrupt you," said Ned, "but I can't get this business out of my head, night or day. Whether you want me or not, I've got to play a hand in this game; but it's on your side, Mr Rattar, and maybe I might be able to help a little if I could get something to go on."

The lawyer nodded.

"I quite understand. Glad to have your help, Mr Cromarty. Dreadful affair. We're all trying to get to the bottom of it, I can assure you."

"I believe you," said Ned. "There never was a man better worth avenging than Sir Reginald."

"Quite so," said Simon briefly, his eyes fixed on the other's face.

"Any fresh facts?"

Simon drew a sheet of paper from his desk.

"Superintendent Sutherland has given me a note of three — for what they are worth, discovered by the butler. The first is about that table. It seems a leg has been broken."

"Bisset told me that before I left the house."

"And thought it was an important fact, I suppose?"

"What its importance is

it's hard to say, but it's a fact, and seems to me well worth noting."

"It is noted," said the Procurator-Fiscal drily, "but I can't see that it leads anywhere."

"Bisset maintains it implies Sir Reginald fell over it when he was struck down; and that seems to me pretty likely."

Simon shook his head.

"How do we know Sir Reginald hadn't broken it himself previously and then set it up against the wall—assuming it ever stood anywhere else, which seems to want confirmation?"

"A dashed thin suggestion!" said Ned. "However, what are the other discoveries?"

"The second is that one or two small fragments of dried mud were found under the edge of the curtain, and the third is that the hearth-brush was placed in an unusual position—according to Bisset."

"And what are Bisset's conclusions?"

"That the man, whoever he was, had brought mud into the room and then swept it up with the hearth-brush—these fragments being pieces that he had swept accidentally under the curtain and so overlooked."

"Good for Bisset!" exclaimed Ned. "He has got there this time, I do believe."

Simon smiled sceptically.

"Sir Reginald was in the library in his walking boots that afternoon. Naturally he would leave mud, and quite likely he swept it up himself then; though the only evidence of sweeping is Bisset's statement about the brush. And what proof is that of anything? Does your hearth-brush always stay in the same position?"

"Never noticed," said Ned.

"And I don't believe anybody notices sufficiently closely to make their evidence on such a point worth a rap!" said Simon.

"A servant would."

"Well, Mr Cromarty, make the most of the hearth-brush then."

There seemed for an instant to be a defiant note in the Procurator-Fiscal's voice that made Ned glance at him sharply. But he saw nothing in his face but the same set and steady look.

"We're on the same side in this racket, Mr Rattar," said Ned. "I'm only trying to help—same as you."

Simon's voice seemed now to have exactly the opposite note. For him, his tone of acquiescence was even eager.

"Quite so; quite so, Mr Cromarty. We are acting together; exactly."

"That's all the new evidence, then?"

Simon nodded, and a few moments of silence followed.

"Tell me honestly," demanded Ned at last, "have you actually no clue at all? No suspicion of any kind? Haven't you got on the track of any possible reason for the deed?"

"Reason?" repeated Simon. "Now we come to business, Mr Cromarty. What's the motive? That's the point."

"Have you found one?"

Simon looked judicially discreet.

"At this moment all I can tell you is to answer the question, 'Who benefits by Sir Reginald Cromarty's death?'"

"Well—who did? Seems to me every one who knew him suffered."

"Sentimentally, perhaps—but not financially."

Ned looked at him in silence, as if an entirely new point of view were dawning on his mind. But he compressed his lips and merely asked—

"Well?"

"To begin with, nothing was stolen from the house. Therefore no outside thief or burglar gained anything. I may add also that the police have made inquiries throughout the whole county, and no bad characters are known to be in the place. Therefore there is no ground for supposing the deed was the work of a robber, and, to my mind, no evidence worth considering to support that view. The only people that gained anything, Mr Cromarty, are those who will benefit under Sir Reginald's will."

Cromarty's expression did not change again. This was evidently the new point of view.

Simon opened a drawer and took from it a document.

"In the ordinary course of events Sir Reginald's will would not be known till after his funeral to-morrow, but if I may regard this conversation as confidential, I can tell you the principal facts so far as they affect this case."

"I don't want you to do anything you shouldn't," said Ned quickly. "If it's not the proper game to read the will now, don't."

But Silent Simon seemed determined to oblige this morning.

"It is a mere matter of form delaying till to-morrow, and I shall not read it now—merely tell you the pertinent facts briefly."

"Fire away, then. The Lord knows I want to learn every derned pertinent fact—want to, badly!"

"In the first place," the lawyer began, "Lady Cromarty is life-rented in the mansion and property, less certain sums to be paid to other people, which I am coming to. She therefore lost her husband and a certain amount of income, and gained nothing that we know of."

"That's a cold-blooded way of putting it," said Ned with something like a shiver. "However, what next?"

"Sir Malcolm gets £1000 a year to support him during the lifetime of Lady Cromarty, and afterwards falls heir to the whole estate. He therefore gains a baronetcy and £1000 a year immediately, and the estate is brought a stage nearer him. Miss Farmond gets a legacy of £2000. She therefore gains £2000."

"Not that she'll need it," said Ned quickly. "That item doesn't count."

Simon looked at him curiously.

"Why not?" he inquired.

Ned hesitated a moment.

"Perhaps I oughtn't to have said anything," he said, "but this conversation is confidential, and anyhow the fact will be known soon enough now, I guess. She is engaged to Sir Malcolm."

For a moment Simon continued to look at him very hard. Then he merely said—

"Indeed?"

"Of course you won't repeat this till they care to make it known themselves. I told you so that you'd see that a legacy of £2000 wouldn't count much. It only means an income of—what?"

"£100 at five per cent; £80 at four."

"Well, that will be neither here nor there now."

Again Simon stared in silence for a moment, but rather through than at his visitor, it seemed. Then he glanced down at the document again.

"James Bisset gets a legacy of £300. There are a few smaller legacies to servants, but the only two that might have affected this case do not actually do so. One is John Robertson, Sir Reginald's chauffeur, but on the night of the crime he was away from home and an alibi can be established till two in the morning. The other is Donald Mackay, the gardener, but he is an old man and was in bed with rheumatism that night."

"I see," observed Ned, "you are giving everybody mentioned in the will credit for perhaps having committed the murder, supposing it was physically possible?"

"I am answering the question—Who that could conceivably have committed it, had a motive for doing so? And also, What was that motive?"

"Is that the whole list of them?"

Mr Rattar glanced at the will again.

"Sir Reginald has cancelled your own debt of £1200, Mr Cromarty."

"What!" exclaimed Ned, and for a moment could say no more. Then he said in a low voice, "It's up to me more than ever!"

"That is the full list of persons within the vicinity two nights ago who gain by Sir Reginald's death," said Simon in a dry voice, as he put away the will.

"Including me?" said Ned. "Well, all I've got to say is this, Mr Rattar, that my plain common-sense tells me that those are no motives at all. For who knew what they stood to gain by this will? Or that they stood to gain any blessed thing at all? I hadn't the foggiest notion Sir Reginald meant to cancel that debt!"

"You may not have known," said Simon, still very drily, "and it is quite possible that Bisset may not have known of his legacy. Though, on the other hand, it is likely enough that Sir Reginald mentioned the fact that he would be remembered. But Lady Cromarty presumably knew his

arrangements. And it is most unlikely that he should have said nothing to his heir about his intention to make him an adequate allowance if he came into the title and Lady Cromarty was still alive and life-rented in the place. Also, it is highly probable that either Sir Reginald or Lady Cromarty told Miss Farmond that some provision would be made for her."

Ned Cromarty said nothing for a few moments, but he seemed to be thinking very hard. Then he rose from his chair and remarked—

"Well, I guess this has all got to be thought over."

He moved slowly to the door, while Simon gazed silently into space. His hand was on the handle when the lawyer turned in his chair and asked—

"Why was nothing said about Sir Malcolm's engagement to Miss Farmond?"

"Well," said Ned, "the whole thing is no business of mine, but Sir Reginald had pretty big ideas in some ways, and probably one of them was connected with his heir's marriage."

"A clandestine engagement, then?"

Ned Cromarty seemed to dislike the term.

"It's none of my business," he said shortly. "There was no blame on any one, anyhow; and mind you, this is absolutely confidential."

The door closed behind him, and Simon was left still apparently thinking.

(To be continued.)

A COMPANY OF TANKS.

BY MAJOR W. H. L. WATSON, D.S.O., D.C.M.,
Author of 'Adventures of a Despatch Rider.'

CHAPTER V.—THE SECOND BATTLE OF BULLECOURT.

(May 3, 1917.)

WHEN the First Battle of Bullecourt had been fought in the office as well as in the field, when all the returns and reports had been forwarded to the next higher authority, and all the wise questions from the highest authority had been answered yet more wisely, we obtained lorries and made holiday in Amiens.

It was my first visit, and I decided whenever possible to return. It rained, but nobody minded. We lunched well at the Restaurant des Huîtres in the Street of the Naked Eunuchs. It was a most pleasant tavern—two dainty yellow-papered rooms over a mean shop. The girls who waited on us were decorative and amusing, the cooking was magnificent, and the Chambertin was satisfying. Coming from the desolate country we could not want more. We tarried as long as decorum allowed, and then went out reluctantly into the rain to shop. We bought immense quantities of fresh vegetables—cauliflowers, Brussels sprouts, new potatoes, and a huge box of apples, also a large "paté de canard," as recommended by Madame de Sévigné. A shampoo enabled us to consume chocolate and cakes. We put our last packages in the car and drove back in the evening.

At Behagnies we made ourselves comfortable, now that the strain was removed of preparing against time for a battle. Our tents mysteriously increased and multiplied. Odd tarpaulins were fashioned into what were officially termed "temporary structures." My orderly-room was cramped. I gave a willing officer the loan of a lorry, and in the morning I found an elaborate canvas cottage "busting into blooth" under the maternal solicitude of my orderly-room sergeant. The piano, which for several days was ten miles nearer the line than any other piano in the district, was rarely silent in the evenings. Only a 6-inch gun, two hundred yards from the camp, interrupted our rest and broke some of our glasses. It was fine healthful country of downs and rough pasture. We commandeered horses from the troop of Glasgow Yeomanry, whom we had obtained to cover our tracks, and spent the afternoons cantering gaily. Once I went out with the colonel, who was riding the famous horse that had been with him through Gallipoli, but to ride with an international polo-player has its disadvan-

arrangements. And it is most unlikely that he should have said nothing to his heir about his intention to make him an adequate allowance if he came into the title and Lady Cromarty was still alive and life-rented in the place. Also, it is highly probable that either Sir Reginald or Lady Cromarty told Miss Farmond that some provision would be made for her."

Ned Cromarty said nothing for a few moments, but he seemed to be thinking very hard. Then he rose from his chair and remarked—

"Well, I guess this has all got to be thought over."

He moved slowly to the door, while Simon gazed silently into space. His hand was on the handle when the lawyer turned in his chair and asked—

"Why was nothing said about Sir Malcolm's engagement to Miss Farmond?"

"Well," said Ned, "the whole thing is no business of mine, but Sir Reginald had pretty big ideas in some ways, and probably one of them was connected with his heir's marriage."

"A clandestine engagement, then?"

Ned Cromarty seemed to dislike the term.

"It's none of my business," he said shortly. "There was no blame on any one, anyhow; and mind you, this is absolutely confidential."

The door closed behind him, and Simon was left still apparently thinking.

(To be continued.)

A COMPANY OF TANKS.

BY MAJOR W. H. L. WATSON, D.S.O., D.C.M.,

Author of 'Adventures of a Despatch Rider.'

CHAPTER V.—THE SECOND BATTLE OF BULLECOURT.

(May 3, 1917.)

When the First Battle of Bullecourt had been fought in the office as well as in the field, when all the returns and reports had been forwarded to the next higher authority, and all the wise questions from the highest authority had been answered yet more wisely, we obtained lorries and made holiday in Amiens.

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tages. Luckily, my old troop-horse was sure-footed enough, and if left to his own devices even clambered round the big crater in the middle of Mory.

A few days after the first battle, "Roo"[1] Ward's company detrained at Achiet-le-Grand and trekked to Behagnies. They came from the Canadians at Vimy Ridge, and were full of their praises. The Canadians left nothing to chance. Trial "barrages" were put down, carefully watched and "thickened up" where necessary. Every possible plan, device, or scheme was tried—every possible preparation was made. The success of the attack was inevitable, and the Germans, whose aeroplanes had been busy enough, found their way to the cages without trouble, happy to have escaped.

"Roo" Ward's company, filled with the unstinted rations of the Canadians, who had thought nothing of giving them a few extra sheep, were gallant but unsuccessful. The ground was impossible and the tanks "ditched." They were dug out, hauled out, pulled out, one way or another under a cruel shelling, but they never came into the battle. It was naturally a keen disappointment to Ward, and he and his company at Behagnies were spoiling for a fight.

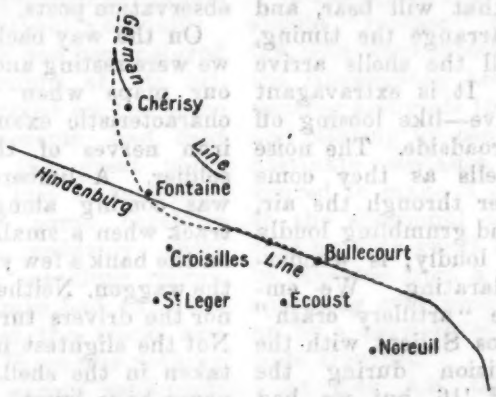
The third company of the battalion under Haskett Smith had been fighting in front of Arras with great dash and astonishingly few casualties. "No. 10" was a lucky company, and deserved its luck, until the end of the war. In sections and in pairs the tanks had helped the infantry day after day. At Telegraph Hill they had cleared the way, and again near Heninel. The company was now resting at Boiry, and we drove over to see Haskett Smith and congratulate him on his many little victories.

It will be remembered that there were two phases to the Battle of Arras. In the first phase we gained success after success. The enemy wavered and fell back. At Lens he retired without cause. Then his resistance began to stiffen, and we were fought to a standstill. Men and guns were brought by the enemy from other parts of the front, and the German line became almost as strong as it had been before the battle, while we were naturally handicapped by the difficulty of bringing up ammunition and supplies over two trench systems and a battlefield. In the second phase we attacked to keep the Germans busy, while the French hammered away without much success away to the south. This second phase was infinitely the deadlier. We made little headway, and our casualties were high. We had not yet begun our big attack of the year. We were losing time and losing men.

The left flank of the German Armies engaged rested on the Hindenburg Line. As the Germans retired, their left flank withdrew down the

[1] Major R. O. C. Ward, D.S.O., killed at Trescaut in November while leading his tanks forward.

Hindenburg Line, until, at the end of April, it rested on the Hindenburg Line at Fontaine-lez-Croisilles. West of Fontaine the Hindenburg Line was ours, and east of it German.



Ward's company and mine were concerned with the "elbow" from Chérisy to Bullecourt. Ward's company was detailed to renew the attack on Bullecourt, and a section of mine under Haigh was allotted to the division who were planning to attack Fontaine itself. At first it was decided to clear the Hindenburg Line in front of Fontaine by a preliminary operation, but the picture of two lone tanks working down the trenches in full view of German gunners on higher ground did not appeal to the colonel, and nothing came of it. The grand attack, the Second Battle of Bullecourt, was scheduled for May 3rd.

On the 29th April Cooper and I went reconnoitring. It was a blazing hot day, with just enough wind. First we drove to St Leger—a pleasant half-ruined village, surrounded by German horse lines under the trees, where the Glasgow Yeomanry had been badly shelled in the days before the first battle, when we were attacking Croisilles and Ecoust. We visited Haigh's section, who had come up overnight from Behagnies,—they were snugly hidden under the railway embankment,—then, putting on our war-paint, we strolled up the hill to the right. It was most open warfare for the guns. They were drawn up on the reverse side of the hill, with no particular protection. Most of them were firing. The gun crews who were not on duty were sitting in the sun smoking or kicking a football about.

Further back our big guns were carrying out a sustained bombardment, and in the course of it experimenting with "artillery crashes," at that time a comparatively new form of "frightfulness." There is some particular point, an emplacement, or perhaps an observation post, which you want to destroy utterly and without question. Instead of

shelling it for a morning with one or two guns, you concentrate on it every gun and howitzer that will bear, and carefully arrange the timing, so that all the shells arrive together. It is extravagant but effective—like loosing off a ship's broadside. The noise of the shells as they come all together through the air, whining and grumbling loudly and more loudly, is wonderfully exhilarating. We employed the "artillery crash" in the Loos Salient with the 16th Division during the summer of '16, but we had not too many shells then.

The Germans were firing little and blindly as we struck across to the Hindenburg Line, having planned to walk alongside it, as far as we might, down towards Fontaine. The enemy, however, suddenly conceived a violent dislike to their old trenches and some batteries near. So we dropped first into a shell-hole, and then, jumping into the trench, found a most excellent concrete machine-gun emplacement, where we sat all at our ease and smoked, praising the careful ingenuity of the German engineer.

We saw much from a distance, but little near, and returned along the upper road by Mory Copse.

Cooper and I made another expedition on the 30th, driving to Heninel and walking up the further side of the Hindenburg Line. We pushed forward to the ridge above Chérisy and Fontaine, but we could see little of the enemy lines on account of the convexity of the slope. Gunner officers were running about like ants searching for positions and observation posts.

On the way back to the car we were resting and looking at our maps when we saw a characteristic example of the iron nerves of the average soldier. A limbered waggon was coming along a rough track when a small shell burst on the bank a few yards behind the waggon. Neither the horses nor the drivers turned a hair. Not the slightest interest was taken in the shell. It might never have burst.

On the night of the first of May Haigh's section moved forward from St Leger. The night had its incidents. Mac's baggage rolled on to the exhaust-pipe and caught fire,—it was quickly put out and no harm done, except to the baggage. The tanks stealthily crossed the Hindenburg Line by an old road and crept to the cover of a bank. Close by was a large clump of "stink" bombs, Very lights, and similar ammunition. Just as the first tanks were passing a shell exploded the dump. It was a magnificent display of deadly fireworks, and the enemy, as usual, continued to shell the blaze. There is no spot on earth quite so unpleasant as the edge of an exploding dump. Boxes of bombs were hurtling through the air and exploding as they fell. Very lights were streaming away in all directions. "Stink" bombs and gas bombs gave out poisonous fumes. Every minute or two a shell dropping close added to

the uproar and destruction. With great coolness and skill the crews, led and inspired by Haigh, brought their tanks past the dump without a casualty.

Mac's tank had been delayed by the burning of his kit. When he arrived on the scene the pandemonium had died down, and the great noisy bonfire was just smouldering. Mac's tank came carefully past, when suddenly there was a loud crackling report. A box of bombs had exploded under one of the tracks and broken it. There was nothing to be done except send post-haste for some new plates and wait for the dawn.

When, on the afternoon of the 2nd, the colonel and I went up to see Haigh, the mechanics were just completing their work, and Mac's tank was ready for the battle a few hours after the plates had arrived.

Ward had moved his tanks forward to Mory Copse, where we had hidden ourselves before the trek through the blizzard to the valley above Noreuil. He was to work with the division detailed to attack the stronghold of Bullecourt. The front of the grand attacks had widened. On the 3rd of May the British armies would take the offensive from east of Bullecourt to distant regions north of the Scarpe. This time the Australians were without tanks.

I had given Haigh a free hand to arrange what he would with the brigade to which he was attached, and, not wishing to interfere with his little command, I determined to remain at Behagnies until the battle was well under way, and content myself with a scrutiny of his plans.

It was agreed that his section should "mother" the infantry, who were attacking down the Hindenburg Line, by advancing alongside the trenches and clearing up centres of too obstinate resistance. I endeavoured to make it quite clear to the divisional commander that no very great help could be expected from a few tanks operating over ground broken up by a network of deep and wide trenches.

At 3.45 A.M. the barrage woke me. I might perhaps have described the tense silence before the first gun spoke, and the mingled feelings of awe, horror, and anxiety that troubled me; but my action in this battle was essentially unheroic. Knowing that I should not receive any report for at least an hour, I cursed the guns in the neighbourhood, turned over and went to sleep.

The first messages began to arrive about 5.30 A.M. All the tanks had started to time. There was an interval, and then real news dribbled in. The Australians had taken their first objective—the front trench of the Hindenburg system. We had entered the trenches west of Bullecourt. Soon aeroplane reports were being wired through from the army. A tank was seen here in action; another tank was there immobile. Two tanks had reached such-and-such a point. With what tremulous excitement the mothers and fathers and wives of the

crews would have seized and smoothed out these flimsy scraps of pink paper! "Tank in flames at L. 6. d. 5. 4." That might be Jimmy's tank. No, it must be David's! Pray God the airman has made a mistake! We, who had set the stage, had only to watch the play. We could not interfere. Report after report came in, and gradually we began, from one source or another, to build up a picture of the battle.

The division attacking Bullecourt could not get on. Furious messages came back from Ward. His tanks were out in front, but the infantry "could not follow." His tanks were working up and down the trenches on either side of Bullecourt. One tank had found the Australians and was fighting with them. Tanks went on, returned, and went forward again with consummate gallantry, but the infantry could not get forward. They would advance a little way and then, swept by machine-gun fire, they would dig in or even go back.

One of his officers, commonly known as "Daddy," was sent back in Ward's car. "Daddy" was dirty, unshorn, and covered with gore from two or three wounds. He was offered breakfast or a whisky-and-soda, and having chosen both, told us how he had found himself in front of the infantry, how the majority of his crew had been wounded by armour-piercing bullets, how finally his tank had been disabled and evacuated by the crew, while he covered their withdrawal with a machine-gun.

These armour-piercing bullets caused many casualties that day. We were still using the old Mark I. Tank, which had fought on the Somme, and the armour was not sufficiently proof.

Bullecourt remained untaken, though the Australians clung desperately to the trenches they had won. The British infantry returned to the railway embankment. The attack had not been brilliant. It required another division to reach the outskirts of the village, but the division which failed on the 3rd of May became a brilliant shock-division under other circumstances, just as "Harper's Duds" became the most famous division in France.

Ward's company was lucky. Several of his tanks "went over" twice, one with a second crew after all the men of the first crew had been killed or wounded. The majority of his tanks rallied, and only one, the tank which had fought with the Australians, could not be accounted for when Ward, wrathful but undismayed, returned to battalion headquarters at Behagnies.

Meanwhile little news had come from Haigh. Twice I motored over to the headquarters of the division with which his tanks were operating, but on each occasion I heard almost nothing. The attack was still in progress. The situation was not clear. The air reports gave us scant help, for the airmen, unaccustomed to work with tanks, were optimistic beyond our wildest dreams, and reported tanks where no tank could

possibly have been. I had given such careful orders to my tank commanders not to get ahead of the infantry, that with the best wish in the world I really could not believe a report which located a tank two miles within the German lines.

At last I drove up to see Haigh. I remember the run vividly, because four 9·2 in. howitzers in position fifty yards off the road elected to fire a salvo over my head as I passed, and at the same moment an ambulance and a D.R. came round the corner in front of us together. Organ, my driver—I had hired his car at Oxford in more peaceful days—was, as always, quite undisturbed, and by luck or skill we slipped through. I left the car by the dressing station outside the ruins of Heninel, which the enemy were shelling stolidly, and walked forward.

A few yards from Haigh's dug-out was a field-battery which the enemy were doing their best to destroy. Their "best" was a "dud" as I passed, and I slipped down, cheerfully enough, into the gloom. Haigh was away at Brigade Headquarters, but I gathered the news of the day from Head, whose tank had not been engaged.

The tanks had left the neighbourhood of the destroyed dump well up to time. It had been a pitch-black night at first, and the tank commanders, despite continual and deadly machine-gun fire and some shelling, had been compelled to lead their tanks on foot. They had discovered the going to be appalling, as, indeed, they had anticipated from their reconnaissances.

When the barrage came down, Mac's tank was in position one hundred and fifty yards from it. The enemy replied at once, and so concentrated was their fire that it seemed the tank could not survive. Twice large shells burst just beside the tank, shaking it and almost stunning the crew, but by luck and good driving the tank escaped.

The tank moved along the trench in front of our infantry, firing drum after drum at the enemy, who exposed themselves fearlessly, and threw bombs at the tank in a wild effort to destroy it. The gunners in the tank were only too willing to risk the bombs as long as they were presented with such excellent targets.

Mac was driving himself, for his driver fell sick soon after they had started. The strain and the atmosphere were too much for his stomach. You cannot both drive and vomit.

The tank continued to kill steadily, and our infantry, who had been behind it at the start, were bombing laboriously down the trenches. Suddenly the tank came to a broad trench running at right angles to the main Hindenburg Line. The tank hesitated for a moment. That moment a brave German seized to fire a trench-mortar point-blank. He was killed a second later, but the bomb exploded against the track and broke it. The tank was completely disabled. It was obviously impossible to

repair the track in the middle of a trench full of Germans.

The crew continued to kill from the tank, until our infantry arrived, and then, taking with them their guns and their ammunition, they dropped down into the trench to aid the infantry. One man of them was killed and another mortally wounded. The infantry officer in command refused their assistance and ordered them back, thinking, perhaps, that they had fought enough. They returned wearily to their headquarters without further loss, but by the time I had arrived, Mac had gone out again to see if the attack had progressed sufficiently to allow him to repair his tank. He came in later disappointed. The fight was still raging round his tank. The German who fired the trench-mortar had done better than he knew. The disabled tank was the limit of our success for the day.

The second tank was unlucky; it set out in the darkness, and, reaching its appointed place by "zero," plunged forward after the barrage. The tank reached the first German trench. None of our infantry was in sight. The ground was so broken and the light so dim that the tank commander thought he might have overshot his mark. Perhaps the infantry were being held up behind him. He turned back to look for them, and met them advancing slowly. He swung again, but in the deceptive light the driver made a mistake, and the tank slipped sideways into a trench at an impossible angle. Most tanks can climb out of most trenches, but even a tank has its limitations. If a tank slips sideways into a certain size of trench at a certain angle, it cannot pull itself out unless it possesses certain devices which this Mark I. lacked. The tank was firmly stuck and took no part in the day's fighting.

The third tank ran into the thick of the battle, escaping by a succession of miracles the accurate fire of the German gunners. It crashed into the enemy, who were picked troops, and slaughtered them. The Germans showed no fear of it. They stood up to it, threw bombs and fired long bursts at it from their machine-guns. They had been issued with armour-piercing bullets, and the crew found to their dismay that the armour was not proof against them. Both gunners in one sponson were hit. The corporal of the tank dragged them out of the way —no easy matter in a tank— and manned the gun until he in his turn was wounded. Another gunner was wounded, and then another. With the reduced crew and the tank encumbered by the wounded, the tank was practically out of action. The tank commander broke off the fight and set out back.

While I was receiving these reports in the dug-out, Haigh had returned from brigade headquarters. The news was not good. The infantry could make little or no impression on the enemy defences. When attacking troops are reduced to bombing down a trench, the

attack is as good as over, and our attack had by now degenerated into a number of bombing duels in which the picked German troops, who were holding this portion of their beloved Hindenburg Line, equalled and often excelled our men.

Wretched Head, whose tank was in reserve, was waiting most miserably to know whether he would be called upon to start out alone and retrieve the battle. It would have been a desperate and foolhardy undertaking for one tank to attack in broad daylight, and I instructed Haigh strongly to urge this view. Luckily the brigade commander had never admired tanks, and now that his attack had failed, he distrusted them. Head's tank was not used that day.

The Germans were still trying to silence that plucky battery above the dug-out. So, praising the skill and labour of the enemy, I crawled along the gallery, which runs the length of the Hindenburg Line, and came out into the open beyond the danger area.

I found my car intact, for my driver, in a proper spirit of respect for Government property, had moved to the shelter of a bank. The road was full of "walking wounded." I had the privilege of giving two officers a lift in my car. They belonged to battalions which had attacked north of Fontaine. At first, they told me, the attack went well, but apparently the enemy had retired to counter-attack the more effectively. Their battalions, diminished and disorganised by the time they had reached their first objective, were overwhelmed and sent reeling back with very heavy casualties to the trenches they had left at "zero."

Without doubt the grand attack of the third of May was a costly failure. North of Chérisy we advanced a little, but later we were compelled to withdraw. The Australians had entered the Hindenburg Line, and there they remained with a magnificent obstinacy which it is difficult to match in all the records of the war. Whether our attack, in spite of its failure, was successful in occupying the attention of Germans, who might otherwise have been assisting their comrades elsewhere in holding up the French, is a question which a humble company commander would not dare to answer.

The tanks had done their part. It was not the fault of Ward's gallant company that Bullecourt remained inviolate. His tanks did all that it was possible to do. At Fontaine, Haigh's section killed more than their share of Germans. We were satisfied that we had shown our usefulness. We prayed now with all our hearts that in the big battle of the summer we might be sent forward in mass on good ground in improved tanks after further training.

(To be continued.)

THE BACK NUMBER.

AMONG the many distinctions conferred by life upon Captain John Raunce, not the least in its import was this, that he was oftener referred to by the name of a ship than by that which he held as part of his birthright. He was entered in the 'Shipping Register' as "John Raunce, master-mariner," his service with the China clippers beginning with the *Fearnought* and passing on to the *Raleigh*, the *Centurion*, and the *Mandarin;* but on shipboard, in the haunts of sailormen ashore, and in the throbbing streets of home and foreign ports it was "Old Fearnought" they called him. And the name singled him out from the ruck, ranked as a decoration. For it was the *Fearnought* that subjected his seamanship to its first supreme test, in alliance with the winds of three great oceans tried his endurance, his heart, his craft, and having proved him, gave him a place of pride among the record-breaking lords of the sea and the honour of being "called out of his name." Even when he surrendered his command of the famous old clipper he carried the title with him, and so strong was the bond between the man and the ship that when in the fulness of time the *Fearnought* was condemned as obsolete, he grieved for her almost as deeply as on that other day when he came home to find his wife's chair vacant and a newly mounded grave among the hills of his own Lake Country. "What d'ye think they've done, Kennedy?" he boomed to the mate as he hurried aboard the *Raleigh*. "They've sold the old *Fearnought*. And her as good as the best of them yet. She's had her day and's done for. That's what they say. The short-sighted fools. A ship like that is never done for till she's sunk or wrecked. And now, I reckon some swab without a soul 'll cut her masts down and turn her into a filthy coal-hulk. It's a damnable shame."

There, after a little more rumbling, the outburst ended. In the fate of his old ship he discerned no pointing finger, nothing that touched his own future. For John Raunce, like all strong men, not to mention a good many of the weaklings, believed in himself, and his kingdom he regarded as founded on a rock. A great man in his own domain, a being of immense driving power, he was really one of the products of a period, one of those autocrats who ruled in the days when the winds of heaven were the dominant power in the empire of the sea, when mariners hailed the hurricane as an ally, reviled the breathless calm as a malevolent foe, and only an occasional funnel trailed its prophetic sign across the illimitable plain. Not yet had

Liverpool flung the snaky track of the Overhead Railway along its incomparable frontier, and without a break for mile upon mile it offered a vision splendid of masts and spars and booms, a gigantic forest interlaced with an exquisite drapery of rigging and of canvas grey and brown, while the fragrancy of Stockholm tar still held its own against malodorous oil. And there in their season you might light upon the *Cutty Sark* and *Thermopylæ*, *Lightning*, *Serica*, or *Tæping*, and in the Captains' Parlour at Andrew Dougal's famous chandlery in Silver Alley count on hearing the gallant story of *Thermopylæ's* ninety-one days from Foo-Choo to the Thames, of *Lightning's* sixty-three to Melbourne, of *Cutty Sark's* 363 knots on two successive days. But none of the great squadron held such a record for consistent sailing as the *Fearnought*, until that black hour when she was judged too little and too old.

That such a man as John Raunce should fall from power was unthinkable. It was recognised, of course, that he shared the menace of all seafarers—the peril of tempest, of fog and fire and the uncharted rock; it was foreseen also that he might even succumb like other strong men to the terrific strain of the swift enterprise, the sleepless vigil, the craft of Nature's uncertain forces, or the battle with her malignant moods. So far as his friends thought of the matter at all, they looked for triumph right to the end, with a fitting ceremonial of farewell. Instead of this he was cast ashore bearing the brand of ignominious defeat. After the manner of many such tragedies, moreover, his downfall had its genesis in success. Long after the *Fearnought* had sailed away into the unknown, the House challenged its rivals with the *Mandarin*, renowned at the time for her mainmast towering 142 feet from deck to truck, her mainyard of 82 feet, and her eighteen hundred tons. Once more transferring his commodore's flag, he paved the way to disaster. If only the ship had condemned herself by a bad start. But her maiden voyage promised a fine turn of speed, her second also was good, but after that Raunce could make nothing of her. "She's a brute," he told them at Dougal's. "There isn't a wind of any sort she shows a fancy for, and she's the very devil for getting into mischief." This was on the eve of her fourth departure, and before he had the chance of another chat in the Captains' Parlour the ship had all her masts carried away, the catastrophe of absolute loss only being averted by a caprice of the wind. He who had never lost anything more than his t'gallant sticks! Under jury-rig the clipper limped home a month behind the rest of the fleet, and her captain carried ashore a load of disappointment and chagrin, but every strand of faith in his own seamanship untouched. "I'm not letting her go yet,"

he declared to the mate as they beat across the Bay. "She's a swine, but I can't fancy being beaten, and so I'll carry on for another voyage. Then, if she licks me again, the owners must find me another ship or I must find other owners."

But he had carried on too long. He discovered that perseverance is only a virtue when crowned by success, that the world has few rewards for good intentions. And so he fell. There was no melodrama, nothing beyond a trifling disturbance of the every-day manner. After the falling of the blow in the owners' office he headed straight for Dougal's, and his own lips announced his humiliation. "What's that, Brash?" he said. "Next voyage? There won't be any next voyage. I'm done. Owners have no further use for me. Grown too old. That's what they say in a roundabout fashion. It's the *Mandarin* that's done me. The blasted fraud. Only the owners don't see it. They will have it that the ship's all right: it's the man that's wrong. Right hand lost its cunning. Nerve gone. That's what they make out—nicely wrapped up. And that's all. Youth must have it's day. And in two years I'll be sixty."

"'Sakes, man, but this is awful," Andrew Dougal gasped, the others too astonished for speech. "Surely you're joking. They'd never cast you adrift."

With ironic fervour Raunce repelled the suggestion. Oh no; nothing so cruel as that. They had considerately offered him the command of some old waggon that didn't call for any driving; or a nice soft job on the shore staff if he still wished to go on working. The thing they had made up their minds to was that he wasn't fit any longer for one of the clippers. Of course, he didn't propose to accept either of the offers. And that was all. He didn't suppose any one else would want him now, and he would most likely settle down ashore and rust out or else spend his substance in riotous living.

"He takes it wonderful easy," said Captain Brash when Raunce had gone; but none of them knew how his steps lagged on the way down to the ferry, and they heard not the torturing refrain, "And now I've got to go home and tell it to Joyce. Her father a failure. Done for. Chucked away like a sucked orange."

II.

For active resistance to the decree whereby the whole fabric of his life had been shattered, Captain Raunce manifested a most resolute distaste. "Oh no," he would say, "we'll let it stand. It's the owners' verdict." But the spell of the sea was in no wise broken, and his time

ashore was mostly divided between Dougal's parlour, where he would sit for hours on end drinking in the tales of the life he might no longer share, and rambling from dock to dock among the ships he could no longer command. Until that day when Chance dropped one of its trifles in his path and revealed to him the identity of a ship, the glory of an opulent past concealed under the rags of a frowsy present. Not that there was anything phenomenal about that. It is one of the fundamental laws of the sea, part of its history too, that while a ship may change her name, she cannot detach her personality. There are exceptions to the law, I admit, but the broad principle stands inviolate, the ship remains proof against the sapping attacks of time, the neglect and the embroideries of man.

By all the signs it was not a hopeful day for discovery—one of November's own, land and river half lost in the veiling of a tawny mist, the web of mast and rigging weirdly distorted and magnified. With such a setting the wonder is that John Raunce saw anything at all; but there was little that he missed on these ramblings in dock-land, and his first glimpse of the *Skald* lit the lamp of interest in his eyes. "Bless my life," he ejaculated, "it must be. There's only one of 'em. But I thought she'd have been broken up years ago." Bending low, he read the name on the overhang of her stern. "Imph!" he muttered, "same old story. *Skald* of Trondjhem, when it should be *Amadas* of Liverpool. She's the only craft I ever clapped eyes on with a rise like that."

With many men, of course, the thing would have ended here, but Raunce was a being apart from type, and the crisis of his own days had ripened him for this encounter. The *Amadas* fitted in with his own disordered tangle, like the segment of a child's picture-puzzle. By a perfectly natural transition of thought he passed from this ship to others, their exploits, their disappearances, often so unaccountable. Not all had been rent limb from limb by the shipbreaker, not all devoured by the sea nor hurled upon destroying rocks. Where might they be hiding, under what flag, what name concealed their greatness and decline? Afterwards, when his adventure was accomplished, admiration becoming articulate nearly always framed itself to a single question, "However did you come to think of it?" But it was all quite simple. From surprise and the pleasure of discovery he passed to reflection, then to desire, and in the moment of passionate longing suggestion sprang into being. "If only I could," he breathed thickly. "I'd show them—— But—— I wonder—— I wonder." And yielding to the wooing of wonder, he sat himself down on one of the mooring bollards, and there, amid the discordant activity

of the docks, abandoned himself to contemplation. When at length he rose and headed for the city, suggestion had acquired the proportions of a somewhat nebulous design. Twisting and twining through all the short-cuts, he presently turned in at Silver Alley, and there, to the group of sea-warriors gossiping in the Captains' Parlour, he propounded the question he was later to carry to the ends of the earth. "Do any of you happen to have fallen in with a ship called the *Isidoro?* She was at Durban the last time I heard anything about her, and flying the Italian flag." About his manner there was a fine affectation of indifference, and so well did he dissemble, giving his inquiry the gloss of mere curiosity, that none suspected its abounding breadth. His quest, moreover, was in vain; they knew as little as himself, and so he left them and crossed over to his home on the Cheshire shore—a home upon which the sea had laid the print of its finger as surely as upon the man who created it.

Externally the house, solid, grey, and flat-fronted, differed in few of its details from its seventy odd neighbours; but within it represented all the difference between the home of the landsman and he who traffics abroad on strange waters. Let the landsman be butcher or baker or candlestick-maker, only the very few have the power to transmute the fact into the terms of domestic environment; but your seafarer suffers no such handicap of expression, and Raunce, having wandered far, had for the garnishing of his dwelling levied tribute on most of the lands imposed between the shores of Britain and the inland sea of Japan, from the North Cape to the Southern Isles. An armoury of barbaric weapons, a fearsome idol acquired in Rangoon, tapestries of exquisite weave, the daintiest of china, with all manner of ware in bronze and brass, cabinets and skins and prints, and a treasury of foreign odds and ends, made every room a sheer delight. The carpets he had brought straight from the bazaars of Oriental hucksters, and the quaintly carved chair, wherein his daughter Joyce was seated when his key rattled in the lock, had been picked up in a queer corner of Madras.

And Joyce was even as the house. If this were the home of one of the sea-kings, then she was one of the daughters—her skin gently touched by the fire of the equatorial sun, her eyes alight with flame of adventure, a suggestion of defiance born in the screaming tumult of the Roaring Forties, of unforgettable days and nights on the poop of her father's ship. She was her father's daughter also in the deeper sense,—the bond of a thorough understanding was shown by the manner of her greeting. In front of a dozen comrades of the deep he had trailed his secret without be-

trayal, but Joyce, before the opening of his lips, knew that something tremendous had happened to him in the hours since he left her.

"What is it, dad?" she asked, and suffered no surprise when, frowning down into the fire, he irrelevantly answered that "It might mean beggary for them."

"Is that all?" she flashed back at him, a smile flickering about her lips. "That's not such a frightful price to pay for some of the things you want,—things you've set your heart on, the things that really matter."

He had a full appreciation of her reference, and it seemed to hearten him. "True enough," he said, "but it isn't everything. You've got to think of other folks. A man has—no right—to make—others pay for his fancies." And then—"I'm thinking, lassie, that you're a bit of a witch. Reading me as if I were a book. I didn't mean to say a word till I'd slept over it—mebbe not even then. But it's no use now. I s'pose I'll have to tell you." Whereupon, settling down in his chair, the girl on the rug by his feet, he made known to her his discovery of the ship whose disguise he had so easily penetrated, and the daring design born in the wilderness of the docks. "I'm almost fearing to think about it," he finished off. "It's a thousand-to-one chance. And suppose I should win through, it'll run away with a heap of money—which mebbe I've no right to risk. I've got a tidy bit stowed away, I'll own, but not enough for—playing games with. And I can't have you——"

"Me!" she checked him. "As if I would stand in your way. I don't care if you leave me without a penny. Why, this is what I have been praying for. All through there has only been one bogey—that you might not do anything. Not that I've ever really thought it likely. I knew you too well,—so well, indeed, that I've kept your bag partly packed ever since you came ashore, and I can have it quite ready in an hour. How soon will you want to start, and where will you begin? Durban? Isn't that where you last fell in with her?"

The face which had been so terribly stern ever since John Raunce "came ashore" broke into a delighted smile. "My certes! but you're a chip of the old block, Joyce," he chirped. "You ought to have been a lad. But I'll not be wanting the bag just yet. I'll start across the river. Liverpool docks to begin with. And after that I'll away to the Thames, Bristol, to the Clyde, the Tyne, and Leith. If she's in a British port I'll hunt her down."

"And when you have found her?"

"Well? Haven't I told you?"

"Yes. But—when you have found her?" To strengthen her pleading she drew closer to him, and kneeling by his side, laid her hands upon his shoul-

ders. "What about the finish? You remember the girl that Longfellow sings about, 'The skipper had taken his little daughter to bear him company.'"

He saw her drift, and his face swiftly gloomed. "I don't know," he returned. "Can't say that I like the idea. It'll be a tremendous business—all flurry — wet decks — carrying on — full of risk. I — I — I think——" But with the words of refusal on his lips he remembered her reception of his project, her enthusiasm, her readiness for sacrifice. "You shall," he capitulated, grasping both her hands. "It's a bargain. You've earned it. If I find her I'll send for you. You shall share the finish—for well or ill."

But the *Isidoro* was not harbouring in any British port, or else John Raunce failed to discover her, and so in due season he embarked on his greater pilgrimage. From Newcastle he cut across to Hamburg and Bremen, whence working back through Rotterdam and Antwerp and so to the Channel ports and Marseilles, he came at last to Brindisi and his first clue, or rather a confused bundle of clues. "I've got too much to pick and choose from," he wrote to Joyce. "And the only thing certain is that *Isidoro* seems to be well favoured as a name among Italian shipowners. I've found five of them. And the pedigrees of the ships are so badly mixed up in their slipshod book-keeping that I'm no forrader. The likeliest of the lot seems to be knocking about the Pacific, so the next letter you get will be from 'Frisco."

For anything he gained he might as well have remained on the Adriatic, and failure still danced faithfully attendant on his round from Calcutta to Rangoon, from Malaysia to the China coast and the havens of Japan. "It's a wearisome bit of hide-and-seek," he wrote from Shimonoseki. "Perhaps I'm wrong, but somehow I seem to be always on the hooker's trail. It reminds me of that game you used to play when you were a kiddie. Sometimes I'm warm, twice I've got mighty hot, but mostly I'm cold. Cold as the North Pole." This was the first positive note of depression, but henceforth in his letters Joyce easily detected an undercurrent of strain, and was in no degree surprised when from Melbourne he announced a change in his method. "It's all spend, spend, spend, and nothing to show. Seems to me I might just as well be earning my keep, and so I've signed on as skipper of the *Morning Glory*, a fore-and-aft schooner registered at Adelaide. She isn't exactly the sort of craft I've been used to, but she'll do. And I reckon that I've as good a chance of finding what I want cruising sailor-fashion, as in barging about from port to port like some bloated plutocrat. At present we're loading for Honolulu, where there's a freight waiting for shipment to Brisbane."

III.

For the round of a year and a trifle over was John Raunce rated as master of the schooner, and in all things he rendered as faithful service as he had given to the august clipper in his days of high renown. But he never relaxed his quest for that elusive barque with the foreign name: in the crowded harbours of Australia, in desolate lagoons, the ports of the wonderful isles, and also in the desert of the open sea, he was ever searching for her, ever with triumphant subtlety propounding the question, "Do you happen to have come across an old barque, name of *Isidoro?*" It was there in the first bunch of things he asked of Gilbert Thorne, the mate of the *Morning Glory*, when he took over the command—Thorne, by the way, being one of that large confraternity of the luckless from whom, in spite of the possession of a master's ticket, the fruits of command are persistently withheld. Of course, at the time Thorne thought nothing about it. *Isidoro?* Never heard of her. And the ship slipped clean out of his mind. But he was not allowed to forget. Before the adventure ended he found his life overshadowed by her, and Raunce the bearer of a magnetic secret out of which circumstance fashioned a link binding them together. For Raunce was driven to treat the mate as an ally without whose help he might fail; and when Thorne, on his part, awoke to the intentness of the quest, he too fell under its spell, with curiosity, of course, as a secondary power. In all probability the actual birth of Thorne's interest dated from the day they put out to sea for the first time, when Raunce recognised that henceforth it was impossible to work alone. "Look here, mister," he said, "I'll be much obliged if you'll keep your eyes skinned when I'm not on deck. That old barque I asked you about, the *Isidoro*, I'm rather set on finding her. So, if you should happen to raise anything with three masts when I'm below you might give me a call." In the long-run his request was revealed as amounting to very little, for while daylight held he would seldom tear himself away from the deck, and should a wisp of sail come creeping round the curve of the sea, he would be sure to trap it. Ashore, his conduct was moulded on the same lines. Once he was free he would set off along the harbour front or leisurely stroll from wharf to wharf, nor would he return until with meticulous care he had appraised every ship at her moorings. And Thorne, interpreting the few external signs, would droop under a sense of disappointment. "The Old Man's drawn another blank," he would mutter.

Thus did Old Fearnought thrash his way about until at length coincidence once more stretched forth its arm and

gathered in its masterful fingers that tangle of almost hopeless threads. They were beating up for Melbourne at the time, and the very accident that he had so intensely dreaded befell them—the passing of a ship in the night. Taking stock afterwards he discovered no factor so profoundly impressive. It enriched his life with an enlarged appreciation of mystery, and often tinged his conversation with reflections on the imminence of the unknown. "There she was, and I didn't know," he would say. "Half an hour longer of darkness or an extra puff o' wind and—everything different till the end of time for three of us: three lives shifted on to a new course—Joyce's, and Gilbert Thorne's, and mine. Almost scares you when you try to think of the things you may have missed." This time, however, luck was ranged on his side, the schooner emerged from the blinding presence of the night before it was too late, and there a couple of leagues away was that strange craft, a decrepit old tramp, her wooden hull seared and scorched, her sails a mass of patches. Raunce was below when the dawn disclosed her, but his eyes picked her up the moment he reached the deck.

"My God," he gasped. "Look at her, man. Look at her." Even while he spoke he became a new being, transfigured, his face ashine, years of his lost youth restored to him. That his conduct should have drawn all other eyes he neither knew nor cared. He was focussed on a single fact. From all the mercantile armadas of the world Chance had thrown that ship into his presence. There was nothing else. Not until Thorne levelled his glass on the stranger and read aloud the name on her stern—*Dom Pedro* of Lima.

"What's that?" Raunce cried sharply, and then crashing one fist into the palm of the other, "Don't care what name she carries or what flag. They can give her a number if they like. There's only one ship afloat with such an entrance, a rise like that, or masts with such a rake."

"Then, I reckon," Thorne ventured, "she's the *Isidoro* ship you've been looking for."

"That's it, my son," Raunce joyfully assented. "She's found new owners. That's all. Changed her name and hoisted the Peruvian flag. And now, seeing that we've found her, we're not going to lose her. Where she goes we go. Never mind what the owners say. I'll foot the bill whatever it costs me. I'll board her if she sails into the mouth of Hades or rams herself against the Antarctic ice-barrier. So glue your eyes on her and set your course according. She'll not walk away from us. She ought to by rights, but she's got a foul hull. That's plain to be seen."

Extravagant though his vow may sound, he meant it, and so throughout the day they played their game of follow my leader; but when night again overtook them Thorne suggested an alterna-

tive course, to which Raunce, after an emphatic rejection, at length agreed. The plan was simple enough. By a little manœuvring soon after daybreak they overhauled the *Dom Pedro*, and learned that she was bound for Brisbane, whereupon the schooner trimmed her sails for Melbourne, whence in due season John Raunce despatched a cable message of two words to Joyce, "Found her." Afterwards he surrendered his command and embarked upon the mail-boat for Brisbane, where he completed his announcement with a second laconic cable, "Got her. Hong-Kong. Wait there."

IV.

A more reluctant enterprise than that upon which Gilbert Thorne embarked when the *Morning Glory* had disgorged her cargo of copra and been handed over to a new mate, it would be difficult to conceive. At every step action waged bitter conflict with judgment, but he relentlessly impelled himself on towards an indeterminate goal. He was going to see the thing through, see what Raunce was up to, for what queer port he was making. And so he threw up his berth and followed the captain to Brisbane, where at the very outset he found mystery piled on mystery. Boarding the *Dom Pedro*, he passed along a disreputable deck to a frowsy cabin, and being bidden to make himself at home, was immediately astounded by the proprietorial formula employed by Raunce in his reference to the barque, "My ship." It was impossible to mistake his meaning. It was not command that he implied, but ownership. His voice thrilled with the pride of possession, and he lounged back in his worn-out chair a being of supreme content. "D'ye mean to tell me, sir," Thorne managed to stammer, "that you've bought this—this—lump of bagwash?" and found his question countered by another: "Can't a man buy a ship if he wants?" As though buying a rotten old hulk or any other kind of craft was an ordinary every-day sort of business. "Now, it's all right," Raunce insisted. "Nothing to make a fuss about." He had bought the ship for reasons of his own—reasons which would presently declare themselves. He had searched all over the world for her. Found her, too. And now he was going to sail her to Hong-Kong, and if Thorne pleased, he could come along as first mate. "Fact is," he persuasively proceeded, "I want you. You're a sailor. No half-bake. That's why I don't want to let you go. And the job I'm going to tackle needs a man who knows how to handle a ship and can keep his nerve." On the matter of Thorne's nerve he manifested an assurance which the mate afterwards

confessed was "a bit of an eye-opener." Ever since the first few weeks of their companionship Raunce had been watching him, silently appraising, weighing him up, and always with this day in mind. And he was abundantly satisfied with the test. So that was how it stood. He wanted a man who could sail a ship, one whom he could trust — in sight or out of sight; one who wouldn't talk either—or ask questions; one who would simply take his orders and carry on. This was to be special service, and secrecy was essential. But all would be made as clear as daylight in the end. He was careful to refrain from any allusion to money. An offer of a high rate of pay Thorne would have converted into an attempt at purchase, bribery inspired by something shady. He was ripe enough for adventure, but not at the expense of freedom or self-respect. When the time came for the selection of a crew, Raunce discovered a task of much greater magnitude—one that laid a severe strain on his discretion and experience. "Must have the right stuff," he insisted, when Thorne suggested that he was being too particular. "It's men that count — always as much as the ship, and many times a great deal more." All water-rats and dock-wallopers he stringently eliminated. None but salt-water men would satisfy—men who could hand, reef and steer, and heave the lead — above everything else, men of the clipper breed. Beyond all this, however, there was a sheaf of greater happenings, and before they left Hong-Kong, Gilbert Thorne sat himself down on the edge of his bunk and tried to count them off on his fingers.

"Number One. The Old Man takes me all aback by fetching his girl aboard. And a bonnier craft never set foot on a poop, though I can't make up my mind about the colour of her eyes. There doesn't seem t' be a word t' fit. But what the pair of them can be up to —it's as thick as fog. She's as deeply dipped as he is too. And what she's going to do aboard this beastly old tub is a puzzler.

"Number Two. The Old Man has the ship dry-docked, and goes bang on repairs. New masts and new copper sheathing. When scraping would have done.

"Number Three. He plays a couple of his mystery tricks. Has her old yards refitted, but fetches a brand-new set on board, and stows them away under canvas. Big stuff, too; he'll spread some sail on them, I'm thinking. But he won't have the hooker cleaned up. Below the water-line new copper, but above the mark —filthy.

"Number Four. He's desperately keen on lying low when we get to Foo-Choo. Wants me to keep a stopper on my jaw tackle. Not a word about where the hooker comes from, or how we found her. And nothing about her refit."

Then there was the matter of the name. Perhaps the greatest surprise of all. A few hours before they made their departure Raunce ordered three of the hands over the side with paint and brushes, and Thorne, coming back from an errand on which he had been sent to the chandlers, discovered that the *Isidoro* of Genoa, having become the *Dom Pedro* of Lima, had again changed her title, and now in bold white letters proclaimed herself as

THE BACK NUMBER,

OF LIVERPOOL.

"That's just what she is," he pronounced as he stepped on board. "The name fits her to a T. An out-and-out back number." His assurance on the point was disagreeably confirmed when they sailed up the river at Foo-Choo, and the barque put down her anchor on the fringe of the tea fleet. Nineteen ships were loading, but only seven of these were fully qualified for a part in the great yearly race to England, two of the others being doubtful and the rest rank outsiders. The *Back Number* was condemned by contrast. Thick-skinned as most sailors though he was, Thorne felt his cheeks burn with shame. It seemed to him that from all the other craft a ribald salvo was being fired. The degradation of it—those in their new attire, black and green and gold, trim and neat, a-shine from truck to water-line, and his own ship an odious drab. How Raunce could stand it all was a mystery—first the contrast, and after that the jibes of the coarser-fibred captains, the still more trying sympathy of others, the poking inquisitiveness of the few who scented a secret. Nothing appeared to make any impression, however, and even when he might have escaped from the ordeal the Old Man refused to accept the chance. Although, by great good luck, he was one of the first to finish the stowing of the tea-chests, he doggedly hung on to his anchor day after day, and was still there when towards the end of that month of June the *Crusader* put out to sea, followed on the next tide by the *Dancing Faun* and the *Woo Sung*. On the second day the fleet thinned out still more; on the evening of the third the *Back Number* lay in the fairway alone, and that night John Raunce, coming off from the shore by boat, sharply ordered the calling of all hands at dawn. "There's a squad of riggers coming aboard," he added, and giving no time for question hurried away aft and vanished down the companion. Softly whistling, the mate watched him go. "So that's the game," he said, his eyes a-twinkle. "New sails. New rigging. New yards." A reflective pause, and then, "There's a streak of daylight at last. He didn't want to let the other skippers see his big booms. *Isidoro—Dom Pedro—Back Number.* Strikes me I'm going to be glad I shipped for

this trip. It promises to be rather diverting."

Four days after the sailing of the *Crusader* the barque towed down the river, and having reached the open sea, she spread her brand-new suit of sails. But she still carried her grime.

V.

About that voyage of the *Back Number* from Foo-Choo to the Mersey perhaps there is nothing more surprising than the way in which both the ship and her owner confounded the first impressions of the crew. On the third night out it was agreed in the fo'c'sle that the barque was a "proper rip," and the Old Man "a reg'lar devil for carrying on"; while by the time they had been at sea a week Tom Carrodus, the bosun, was gloomily predicting that if Raunce went on cutting off corners as he had started the hooker would be piled up hard and fast on one of the abounding reefs before she got through the China Sea. It was sheer madness—this was how they looked at it,—an open invitation to death, running through this archipelago of reefs, islets, half-tide rocks, in the dark too, often with only a few feet to spare on either hand; sweeping over shoals where the very colour of the water was sufficient to daunt the stoutest heart; sneaking in under the land at sundown to catch the shore breeze, going so close that again and again every man aboard gave the ship up for lost. And yet, in the hour of their greatest peril they were compelled to admire. "You'd think the bloomin' wagon was alive," said the bosun one day after a manœuvre of extreme risk. "What strikes me about it ain't so much that the Old Man knows eggsactly what she can do as the hooker knowin' what he wants her t' do and a-doin' it. He'll make her sit up on her starn one o' these days an' wag her bowsprit at the sun. An' the knowledgeableness of 'im likewise. He knows these waters as well as I know Ratcliffe 'Ighway or the Regent's Road at Liverpool, an' so with a bit o' luck he'll mebbe make his landfall."

Concerning all this, of course, the log of the *Back Number* makes no revelation; it merely records a succession of "strong winds" and "squalls," mentions without boast the passing of the Straits on the twenty-third day out, and introduces those stupendous hours in the Indian Ocean with a bald statement running to no more than a couple of lines.

When Thorne turned in the ship was snoring along before a fairly steady breeze; when he awoke she was canted at a steep angle and his little world was filled with a fury of sound. "Jove, but the wind must have got up." That was his first sleepy thought, and then he bolted from his bunk, struggled into his clothes, and clamber-

ing up the companion was confounded by the revelation. He had emerged into a realm of terrific passion through which this ship that he had condemned as "a lump of bag-wash" was driving with magnificent abandon, her lee rail awash, the slicing thrust of her stem piling up the sea athwart her hull. She was travelling through a valley which she carved for herself as she advanced. To a sailor all this was of course a trifle, part of his bargain, one of the things he ships for and becomes inured to; given a sound vessel and plenty of sea-room there was nothing to worry about. But here there was John Raunce to reckon with, and the mark of his work overwhelmed the mate with apprehension. Down below, that deafening cacophony in his ears, he had accepted without question a mental picture of bare poles, or at least poles half-stripped of their canvas. Though he had not been called, he quite anticipated that much. Yet here was the barque almost as when he turned in—barring her mizzen-royal and gaff-topsail, her colossal pyramid still outspread. Raunce must be mad, stark staring mad. Next thing he would have her dismasted. He was simply chucking their lives away. His own life too and that of Joyce, his daughter. Hanging on to the companion-hatch amid the welter of flying scud, Thorne envisaged the girl prisoned in the cabin, abandoned to terror, maybe on her knees, all hope gone; and rage against her father flamed up again with force that made him ripe for mutiny. And then he saw her. Made a slight turn and beheld her clinging with one hand to the mizzen-shrouds, a life-line about her waist, her eyes ashine like stars, lips parted, cheeks flushed. Even her sou'wester was not big enough to conceal the signs of exultation. With a cheery wave of the hand she beckoned him to her, and he would fain have responded, but in time he remembered his duty, and climbing the slanting deck to the captain's side, was told that "it had come on quite sudden. Started to blow—" but the wind nipped the words and carried half of them away. "Thought wouldn't—call—better let you sleep. No telling—get more. In luck—looks—going to last."

Raunce bent his head to catch the mate's response, and bellowed back an indignant retort. "Snug her down?—What for?—When—logging it off like this. D'ye take—fool? What's—clipper—built for? No good unless—stand up—bit of a blow. This—only start. More coming. Lot more."

For himself, Thorne would have let it end at that, but there was that girl clinging to the shrouds, and for her sake he dared again. "What about Miss Joyce?" he yelled, and found that not even for his girl was Raunce touched by fear. "Joyce," he cried back. "Ay, ay. Did—ever—see girl like her? Happy as—queen. Having time—life.

Ought—been a lad." And then, making a trumpet of his hands, "She's been on deck all night. Wish you'd stand-by—get her down—cabin. And see—breakfast. What? Oh no. Have a bite up here." As Thorne turned away to carry out his commission, Raunce laid a detaining hand on his shoulder. "Don't—worry, my son," he shouted. "Bit of clipper sailing—that's all. I know what—you're thinking. But you're—wrong. Ask Joyce. She knows—father's name—what men called—Old Fearnought—and why. You're going to see—carrying on."

All through the hours of daylight the barque was held to her course, tearing savagely up the short steep seas, half burying herself in the downward plunge, the boom of thunder in her canvas, the shrilling of a devils' chorus in the tautened strings of her cordage. Throughout the night, too, she bored ahead into the profundity of that frantic abyss. All through the second day also, on and on and on, and so she swept into the core of that terrific third when the hurricane altered its method of attack. It was a little after the passing of the night, black as a wolf's throat, into the dismal grey of a sunless dawn, that Thorne first became conscious of a difference in the wind. Not that its violence could be said to have relaxed, but its steadiness was no longer sustained, the violent drive was exchanged for the still more violent gust. "It's going to change its course," he thought, "and if it does, God help us. She'll turn turtle." He fancied that Raunce was different also, keener, screwed up to meet a new challenge, and so he braced himself for the call for which he had really been waiting ever since he thrust his head through the cabin-companion three days ago. But the waiting was not over yet, not for ever so long—not until noon when the wind suddenly whipped about, and then the voice of the captain crashed into the tumult, and Thorne rushed headlong to the main deck. As he cleared the poop he felt the ship heel over, heard a scream, "My God, she's going," saw the sea sheer aloft, a gigantic curling wall, solid and green right up to its creamy crest, saw the main-yard stab the wall with its tip, and then was buried in the flood as the monster thundered down upon them. "She's gone," he thought. "Clean over." But the barque with a sullen roll shook herself free, and there was Thorne battling through it waist-deep, heading for the halliards, and bellowing a torrent of orders to men unwilling to obey. For the Old Man had carried on too long; that was the belief of every one aboard, his daring had killed their last shred of confidence; better a place on the solid deck as long as it floated than be hurled from the yards like pellets from a catapult. Aloft there was no foothold, no grip, no chance. Nothing at all. Only

to fling themselves on to the foot-ropes, battle for a few seconds with those canvas giants, flapping, cracking, bone-breaking, man-killing devils, and then—go. Until the testing moment they had probably never given a thought to the price demanded of them, and so to the call of "All hands!" they streamed at desperate hazard along the deck. Then one heart faltered and the mischief was done. Hesitation proved contagious. Routing authority, breaking down their traditional loyalty, it made each man a law unto himself. They were brave men too, but even the highest courage demands, if not a chance for itself, at any rate the chance of success as the reward of sacrifice; and they were being asked to throw their lives away without the gain of any end. The ship was doomed. On her beam-ends already. Nothing could save her. They would not go aloft.

Now, rebellion becoming articulate, they bellowed their defiance aloud, each in his own way, with his own imprecations. The mate might kill them if he liked. And that, it looked as though Thorne was bent on doing. Rage took possession of him; murder, the spirit that wipes out the life of a man as lightly as that of a fly. At that instant he had a vision of Joyce, only a few yards from him, lashed to the mizzen-shrouds. Joyce made for life, and doomed by these craven fools to death. His sense of impotence shattered his self-control; with a salvo of searing curses he leaped into their midst, his arm shot out, a man pitched down the deck into the wash of the lee-scuppers. A second he kicked away from his grip on a life-line, on all within reach he showered a tempest of blows, his arms swinging like flails. But still they held to their rebellion. Here indeed was Force, but impressionless, barren of the personality that commands. That higher power was not upon the deck but on the poop. And in time it spoke, in time to rescue those precious seconds from irretrievable loss. Like a trumpet call it rose above the clamour of wind and sea and maddened men—

"Aloft—you dogs! Aloft! Up with you — every man! D'ye hear?"

And sweeping about they discovered John Raunce by the break of the poop, his sou'wester pushed back, right arm extended, a revolver covering them. Again he bellowed, "Aloft — you swabs! One——" That first threat was also the last. His conquest was instantaneous. Yielding everything they sprang into the shrouds, hand over hand they stormed the heights of that appalling region they had refused to face, their surrender not that of one type of fear vanquished by a greater, but of Fear submitting to Force, spiritual force conquering brute materialism. Their submission was complete too, not a man held back. As the watch tailed on to the braces, confusion again ran

riot, but it was confusion leading to an ordered end. The end was long in declaring itself. Pinned down in the trough, it seemed as if the barque had verily lost her chance, that no human agency could liberate her from the double grip of wind and sea. But Force was dominant still, brain and valiant labour pitted against unreasoning might. From the poop John Raunce worked his ship with all the subtlety which had given him fame; aloft the crew wrestled with those colossal coils of canvas, fingers bleeding, sense throttled, choking, gasping, the labour of half an hour undone in a second; down below also their comrades toiled in a welter of broken sea, up to the waist, to the neck. Nor did any man labour in vain. Perceptibly at last the ship responded, slowly she rose, defiantly shook herself free. Six hours after Gilbert Thorne predicted her doom the *Back Number* was scudding along under lower topsails.

But salvation was only one of the ends achieved. Across the face of the world in those three days of flight the barque had furrowed a line 1107 knots in length, and, when he had pricked off the course on the chart, Raunce called upon Joyce and the mate to behold the fruit of conquest.

"That's what the old hooker's done," he said with abounding content, "when some of you thought she was booked for Kingdom Come. Three hundred and twenty-five knots the first day, three hundred and seventy the second, and then, for a slap-bang wind-up, four hundred and twelve. Better than the best. You'd never have thought it of her when we picked her up in the Pacific—eh? But then ships are much like folks—you should never judge either by what they wear. Not," he hesitated a moment, his eyes twinkling, "that I'm against dress in its proper place, and I don't see why the boat shouldn't have her reward. She's out to win two things this voyage, and, for a start, I reckon she's won a coat of paint. So, as soon's the weather moderates, we'll touch her up. Let me see, Joyce. What is it? Hull black, with dummy ports and a gold stripe; lower masts oak-grained and upper masts white; bulwark panels white, with a green stencil; and deck-houses and all the rest to match. That's the ticket, my lassie — isn't it? Good Lord! Four hundred and twelve knots in a day! What no other ship has ever done. She's earned all the paint afloat."

VI.

Great is the transforming power of paint. Out of the dissolute derelict picked up at Brisbane it produced a marine dandy. By the time they rounded the Cape the ship

had ceased to be a drab: she swept past St Helena's sombre front tricked out in glorified patchwork, and she raised the Lizard Light in queenly apparel. Her class she plainly declared to those with eyes to see. At any rate Captain Peter Snell, of the Liverpool tug *Crowing Cock*, had no doubt on the matter when she hove in sight off the Tuskar. At the end of a night's cruising "on spec," he picked her up an hour after sunrise, her hull burnished by the flood of light to the sheen of beaten copper, her sails as webs of ivory.

"Well, I'm blest!" he gasped, and, slipping abaft the funnel, he called on the engineer to "look what's comin', Tom! A prize packet. One of the tea-boats. We're in luck. She'll be ready t' take steam without barging a lot about the price."

Screening off the sun with his hands he closely scrutinised the barque. "Can't christen her," he growled, and reached for his glasses, whereupon confusion gripped him. "Here's a rum streak. Clipper I've never heard of. *Back Number.* And flying a house-flag I've never sighted afore. As delicate as a lady's pocket-handkerchief. Looks like a bit o' woman's work. White, with a blue edge, and if it isn't made o' silk I'll eat the timberhead. *Back Number.* Which is what she doesn't look. Though she does happen t' be wooden-built. Anyhow, that's not the point. What matters is putting a line aboard before some other swab nips along. She's not likely t' want steam at present; but this wind isn't going to hold, and she'll be glad of a rope before she's athwart Point Lynas. So we'll put about and go easy till she overhauls us." And then, as the mate joined him on the bridge, "Can't make her out nohow, Steve. There's something about her I ought to remember, and yet—*Back Number*—never heard tell of such a craft. Such a daft name too! No manner of sense in it."

Assured that as long as the wind held, any offer of service would be rejected, he planned to let the barque go ahead and himself follow in her wake; but the impetuous wayfarer desired his conversation as well as his company—a flutter of signal-flags said so—and almost before she got within hail a strident voice clamoured for news.

"Tug ahoy! When did you leave Liverpool?"

"Came out on last night's tide, sir."

"Any news of the tea-boats?"

It was a tall man with a lean frame who asked the question, and his eagerness for the answer was betrayed by the way he stretched over the rail, hand to ear.

"Not a word, sir. Don't think they're expected just yet." A pause, and then: "Do you happen to be tea, sir?"

"We are, my son." Triumphantly the declaration rang across the intervening strip of

water-flood. "And glory-be, we've done it. Eighty-seven days from Foo-Choo! Broke the record and licked the lot."

Eighty-seven days. Licked the lot. Every man aboard the tug pounced upon the words and echoed them in reverential wonder. But ere they had time to raise a cheer they beheld that girl on the poop throw her arms around the captain's neck and the mate grip him by the hand, though the *Crowing Cock* was too far away for them to catch Thorne's naïve avowal, "Well, I don't rightly know what it's all about, sir, but I'm mighty glad whatever it is." As for Raunce he was stricken dumb. This was the supreme hour of his life, and therefore beyond speech. Abruptly he turned and walked away aft, but swiftly that strength of will which had carried him through so many vicissitudes mastered emotion, and back he went to the rail with another call—

"You don't seem to know me, Peter Snell."

It was an illuminating challenge. It roused the tug-boat skipper to a fling of the arms and a shout of exultation. "Dash my dead-lights if it isn't Old Fearnought. The Old Man himself. Did ye hear, boys?" This to his crew. "Old Fearnought, Him what got fired for growing old. And now he comes spanking home again with a fresh record. Eighty-seven days from Foo-Choo. And licked the bloomin' pack. Those crack noo ships among 'em. Oh, boys, but this is mighty."

So mighty indeed that his tug must acclaim it in the tug's own fashion, and there and then he plucked at the syren-cord and the *Crowing Cock* screamed a raucous cock-a-doodle-de into the waste places of the sea. His men also lifted up their voices in a lusty shout, and the crew of the *Back Number* hung upon the rail and acknowledged the cheer with one of deeper volume.

But the appetite of Captain Peter Snell was merely whetted. He wanted more. For five minutes he gave his eyes a spell of desperately hard work and then through his megaphone he hailed again. "Cap'n Raunce, ahoy! Where did you happen t' pick up your noo command. Can't call her t' mind."

"I picked her up in the Pacific. She was called the *Dom Pedro* and she hoisted the Peruvian flag. Before that she was the *Isidoro*, sailing under Italian colours."

"And what flag might she have sailed under before that?"

"Under the best flag of all, Peter Snell," John Raunce roared back, and he rounded it all off with a command to the mate. "It's time for the paint brushes again," he said. "Those damned letters. We'll have them wiped out. There's only one name for the boat now. She's won it back again. *FEARNOUGHT* of LIVERPOOL. And tell the boys to paint it well."

So, with her name restored, the famous old clipper rounded

the north-west Lightship in the wake of the tug. But without ostentation, as became a ship of her repute. This being much to the disappointment of Peter Snell, against whom John Raunce had threatened all manner of penalties if he so much as laid a finger on his syren-cord. As sedately as in the old days she slipped up to the Sloyne, and having put down his anchor off the Salthouse Dock and obtained his bill of health, the captain was rowed ashore, and at once betook himself to Silver Alley to report his arrival at Dougal's. "Must have everything done shipshape," he explained to Joyce. And even as he had been hailed between the Tuskar and Point Lynas, so now was he greeted again.

"Why, if it isn't old Fearnought!"

Cheerily also they made him welcome, and begged for news of his wanderings and the manner of his arrival. But when, in a voice that rigidly suppressed the ring of exultation, he proclaimed his triumph, a sense of deep awe fell upon them, and they regarded him almost as one returned from the dead.

"Oh, I've come home just as I used to do. Ship's lying in the river. Left Foo-Choo three days after the crowd. Made the passage in eighty-seven days, port to port. You wouldn't see me reported, for I made my departure aboard a disgraceful old slut called the *Back Number*. Only it happens that on the way she found her proper name again. It's the one she passed on to me when we were both a bit younger."

Afterwards, astonishment having spent itself, they clamoured for details, and Raunce filled in a few of the blanks. There was nothing to fuss about, he protested. Once he had found his ship the rest was plain sailing. Secrecy was the most awkward part of the business, especially when it came to getting a cargo, but even that was fixed up all right, thanks to his old friend Donaldson, the teaman at Foo-Choo, the only one who shared the secret with Joyce. For the rest Thorne worked it finely — without asking questions—and no one ever suspected his old wooden draggle-tail. Wood! That was part of the explanation. Good honest teak. None of your new-fangled iron boxes. And there was nothing more. He had cleared his name, regained his rank—the proof was swinging to an anchor in the river. Docking next tide.

"And after that," Andrew Dougal slyly insinuated, "I s'pose you'll be trying to knock a few more hours off the passage."

But Raunce shook his head. "I'll leave that to others," he said. "Think I'll give Joyce and Gilbert Thorne a chance. The old *Fearnought* 'll make an A1 wedding present."

OSWALD WILDRIDGE.

"TIMEO DANAOS . . . ."

THE squadron leader looked across the level valley of the Struma, and pointed out the direction in which he wished the patrol to go. "And be back about 1.30," he added. M—— glanced at the map and murmured to himself "Demir Hissar," without troubling to calculate the distance. They were close beside the river. It would not take long to cross the level expanse of plain, studded with villages, but devoid of trees, which stretched across to the mountains on the other side—a minor Holland set beneath a mimic Switzerland. And once he had reached the foot of the mountains he could follow the railway line to Demir Hissar.

They trotted along the road towards the wooden bridge which spanned the river. Enjoying, as it did, the monopoly of being the only metalled road in Eastern Macedonia, it possessed the great advantage of being clear and unmistakable, albeit rough. For Macedonia is a roadless land. Rough tracks, which sudden thunderstorms soon convert into torrents, serve to connect the villages. Those who must travel do so on foot, or perched insecurely on the backs of diminutive donkeys. And the track wanders hither and thither, according to the individual caprice of the donkey. Thus a track which begins as a clearly marked path resolves itself at points of difficulty into a network of paths, and offers a choice embarrassing in its variety.

The bridge across the Struma was a simple, solid, wooden structure. Throughout its length it was decorated at every yard or two with the blue-and-white flag of Greece.

"The Greeks seem to be very proud of their bridge," remarked the officer of the patrol to the interpreter officer riding beside him.

"Apparently," replied the latter. "But perhaps it's just by way of celebrating Easter. In any case, they've not got much to be proud of, for the Turks built it."

At the farther end of the bridge was a small guard-house, in which lived a Greek officer and a guard of some twenty Greek soldiers. As they approached, the Greek officer stepped into the road, saluted, and began to speak in Greek.

"What does he want?" asked M——. "Says he has orders to stop all traffic? Oh, that's absurd. Tell him I'm taking a patrol across, and that I've got to go through."

Further conversation in Greek. "He says he's very sorry, and is quite polite about it; but we can't go through without orders," announced the interpreter officer.

"Very well, then. I'm going through in spite of him."

The unfortunate Greek officer, much perturbed, begged for time to get instructions by telephone from Seres.

"I'll give him five minutes to get through to Seres."

For the next few minutes the guard-house resounded with the ringing of telephone bells and frantic cries of "Allo! Xeres! Allo! Xeres!" But Seres turned a deaf ear, maintaining an attitude of Olympic aloofness: and the man on the spot was left to face the situation without the aid of higher authority. Heated and out of breath, he emerged at the end of the five minutes. And the Gordian knot was cut by his plaintive realisation of the impossibility of hindering the passage of seven British troopers with a guard of twenty Greeks. "If you insist on going through, I cannot stop you," he said, with a pathetic gesture of helplessness.

The patrol went on, and soon realised the impossibility of reaching Demir Hissar. The curious clearness of the hills hemming in the wide valley had falsified their ideas of distance. And by the time they had crossed the fast-drying marshland and threaded their way between high fields of grain to the railway it was time to return. At the bridge stood the officer of the guard, relief written plain upon his features. For "Xeres" had at last awoken from its telephonic slumber. And even honour was satisfied by a certificate, smilingly written by the patrol leader, to assure all and sundry that he had "forced a passage across the bridge."

. . . . . .

The squadron lay encamped upon a small sandy common beside a stream, rapidly dwindling as the heat increased, which crossed the road and lost itself among the marshes beside the larger river. In the coolness of early morning the cattle of the village straggled slowly down the stream to pasture in the marshes, returning again as evening fell and the sun dipped behind the high hills to the west. The first rays of morning found the peasant families at work in the fields, anxious to get their tobacco planted before the heat of the day. In a courtyard at the end of the village lived the company of Greek soldiers which found the guard upon the bridge; and now and then strange picturesque individuals, clad in the short white kilt, the falling tasselled cap, and the curly-toed shoes of the royal bodyguard, passed the camp on their way to or from the barracks.

One day the major announced to a startled mess that he had invited two of the Greek officers to dinner. At the hour appointed came the stout Officer Commanding, and a thin, black-browed, dark-visaged lieutenant, whose very appearance confirmed the statement that he had been the leader of a Greek "comitadji" during the last Balkan war. The conversation—like the seating accommodation in the bell-tent which served as mess-room—was limited, for the interpreter officer alone knew the language. But he performed prodigies of rapid translation, exercising all his talents to overcome the modest reserve of the ex-guerilla leader. Eventually the polite

taciturnity of that grim officer succumbed to the cheering influence of the port, which—distrusting whisky—he had been led into drinking when offered under the simple generic description of "wine." And he spoke simply and unaffectedly of violent deeds done in a lawless land by his band of irregulars. The evening ended, as the ceremonial politeness of the guests showed that it must end, in solemn toasts, drunk in a posture as nearly erect as the narrow confines of a bell-tent would allow, to the health of the Greek and the allied nations, and to the success of the war—a phrase sufficiently ambiguous to enlist the whole-hearted sympathy of all shades of opinion. Then, with a clicking of heels and stiff salute, the guests departed, after having accepted an invitation for two of their number to come to dinner next Tuesday evening.

Like international law, which has been described as "law which is not law," the Greek nation is not a nation, but a collection of cosmopolitans. And, as might be expected, their cosmopolitanism has taught them that politeness is the best policy. So the officers of the squadron received a cordial invitation to attend the festivities about to take place on Easter Sunday. And on Sunday afternoon three somewhat apathetic officers roused themselves from the lethargy induced by the unseasonable heat, and strolled across to "assist" at the culmination of the three-days' revels. In an open space beside a large tree there were booths formed of branches for the Greek officers and the headmen of the village. The Greek private had contented himself with seating accommodation formed by the simple expedient of digging a trench to contain his feet. In one of the booths, graced by the presence of the village headmen, whose somnolent hilarity testified at once to the arrival of the guests long after the commencement of the festivities, and to the fact that temperance drinks were not "de rigueur," stood a richly iced cake, cunningly coloured and fashioned into the semblance of a miniature tree-trunk. Tumblers of wine were produced, and the fate of the cake, suspended by the impolite tardiness of the guests' arrival, was sealed. Suitable toasts could not, of course, be omitted. But conversational difficulties were conveniently avoided by the fact that the increasing conviviality of the headmen was accompanied by a desire for song which rendered all conversation impossible. So the singers were left to continue without interruption, whilst the Greek officers, shirt-sleeved and strenuous, resumed their participation in the dances taking place in the shade of the wide-spreading tree. Apparently, during the celebration of Easter, discipline in the Greek Army is relaxed. Officers and men mix freely, and treat one another on a footing of equality. The private soldier, giving the final lick to his new-rolled cigarette, demands and obtains

from his company commander the momentary loan of a lighted cigarette, in order to practice that national economy of matches which never fails to strike the new-comer. Men and officers join hands in the circle of the dance—an incomplete circle, swaying to and from the centre with a quaint irregular step, but moving ever round the solitary figure in the centre which discourses a weird wild music upon an embryo bagpipe. The dance is led by an energetic officer, handkerchief in hand, whose agility is equalled only by the ingenuity of his steps, and whose determination to outshine himself on this occasion brings him to the verge of collapse. Some distance away, on a carpet of grass on the farther side of the dry stream-bed, the women and girls of the village, dressed in their gayest clothes embroidered with colours, and tricked out with coloured handkerchiefs as head-dresses, danced the self-same dance with less energy but greater grace.

Tuesday morning dawned cloudless after a thunderstorm, which during the night had swollen the waters of the little stream beside the camp. On the farther bank, seeking a crossing dry-shod, wandered a blue-uniformed French officer. Explanations shouted across the stream were unintelligible. Once he had been ferried across on horseback, however, it became clear that he wished to get into "immediate telegraphic communication" with Salonique, having news of importance to communicate as a result of his visit that morning to Seres with the convoy of French lorries which carried provisions to the Greek population. So a telegram was written and despatched. Within an hour or two came orders to the squadron. "It is reported that the German Consul from Drama is in Seres. He leaves by the two o'clock train. Arrange to have him arrested. Avoid trouble with the Greeks. . . ." There was no time to lose in considering plans of campaign, for the railway from Seres to Drama lay many miles away across the unending plain. Moreover, if the Consul was to be arrested without opposition from the Greeks, to enter Seres was out of the question, and only one plan remained—to hold up the train after it had left Seres. So a troop was hastily saddled and sent off under an officer, whose South American experience presumably fitted him for deeds of high-handed lawlessness. By dint of hard riding they arrived at the chosen point on the railway line in time to fell a log across the line, send one man forward to flag the train, and post the remainder in suitable positions before the arrival of the train. The train came, and dutifully stopped. There was no difficulty in identifying the Consul, travelling in a first-class carriage full of Greek officers. But the presence of the Greek officers, supported by a company of soldiers, proved an unlooked-for obstacle, in view of their loudly professed friendship for their bosom friend the Consul. In fact, one and all

drew swords and brandished revolvers, protesting vehemently that they would lay down their lives—nay even, if necessary, commit suicide—rather than permit the arrest to take place. Excitement and loquacity reigned supreme. Threats, blandishments, and bluff succeeded interminable argument, which dragged on far into the afternoon. The Greek soldiers were lined up, their rifles loaded, ready to fire if the attempted arrest were carried out. Finally the troop leader explained to the senior officer that his orders were to make the arrest, but on no account to fire on the Greeks: that the troopers, if fired on, would not return the fire: and that if the Greeks should carry out their threat—with or without orders—the sole responsibility would rest on his head, as being the senior Greek officer present. And whilst that officer was pondering this new aspect of the position, the Consul and his trembling "cavass" (servant) were speedily removed.

Late in the evening the jaded troop rode into camp, triumphantly bringing their two saddle-weary prisoners, whom darkness had enabled them to smuggle without question past the Greek guard on the bridge. Two armoured cars were in readiness to take them at once to Salonique, there to be placed in the safe custody of one of His Majesty's ships.

Some time after the departure of the Consul a sudden idea occurred to some one. "I'd quite forgotten that it's Tuesday night. This is the evening we asked those Greeks to dinner."

"Well, it's just as well they've stayed away," said another.

"Oh, I don't know," protested the junior subaltern, whose chief characteristic is simplicity and childlike faith. "They seem a very decent crowd. I'm sure they're not pro-Germans."

The second-in-command muttered, as if to himself, "Timeo Danaos . . ." and refused to complete the quotation in answer to the expected query from the junior subaltern.

. . . . . .

On the following morning the officer in command of the Greek troops in the village came into camp and asked to see the major.

"I have been instructed," said he, through the medium of an interpreter, "to demand the surrender of the German Consul whom you arrested yesterday."

The major smiled. "I'm afraid you are too late. The Consul left for Salonique by motor last night."

Relief, rather than disappointment, showed itself in the Greek officer's appearance. Then he explained. "My orders were to surround your camp, in case you should refuse."

"Well, then, we've both been saved a lot of trouble," answered the major.

The junior subaltern's views have since undergone a modification. But he is still unable to complete the quotation.

PARADISE IN WAR-TIME.

I. THE LOTOS-EATERS.

In the English language there are words—or rather sentences, phrases, a beautiful use of words—fit to describe Paradise. Though these have been found, and no doubt may be found again, such gifts are hidden from the humbler scribes (not for lack of seeking); but perhaps, having found Paradise, one may be forgiven for an attempt to describe it in rather ordinary language.

I am sitting at the upper end of an open valley: behind me in a semicircle rises a range of jagged mountains; the peaks are just touched with gold and appear strangely transparent; the lower rocks are the colour of wood smoke.

To the right an irregular mass of houses with blue and primrose walls and broad red roofs climbs slantingly up the ridge, on the summit of which three cypress trees stand up clearly against the sky. Half-way up this slope of the Old Town, above the maze of deep shadow and the faint gleam of colour-washed walls, a church's tall and slender campanile is silhouetted against the last of a golden sunset.

To the left, across the deep gloom of an olive grove, rises the other wall of the valley—an immense mass of red-golden cliffs, standing full in the glare of the sinking sun: it is vast and beautiful—as a wall of Paradise should be. Beneath the golden cliffs and round the walls of the Old Town in the lap of the valley lies a peaceful sea, dark blue, with here and there a splash of gold: in the early morning one can see Corsica in the far distance, like a shadow upon the waters.

But now it is the evening of a cloudless day: the first stars are out in a green-blue sky, the air is full of the scent of orange blossom: in the dusk the wistaria gleams like a cascade of foam: from the gloom of the trees sounds a child's laughter. There is Peace in Paradise. . . .

But it is that word which breaks the spell. There is no Peace, and perhaps our Paradise is but an illusion, a land of Lotos-Eaters whither we have escaped—

> "a land
> In which it seemed always afternoon.
> . . . . . .
> A land where all things always seem'd the same!"

Yet the red rocks are real enough, and the Old Town with its slender belfry, and the bay between the hills: also the hotel and this garden of roses and wistaria looking down into the blue Mediterranean are real. All this, and we who live in it and call it Paradise, is real.

But it is the end of March 1918: we have just heard that the great German offensive has started. It has made us remember what for long we had

almost forgotten — that, in fact, there is no Peace, but War, and that we are out of it—Lotos-eating.

Sitting here in the silence of the evening surrounded by flowers, under a clear untroubled sky, the realisation has come like a stab: the knowledge that in this same country our friends are in the thick of battle and cold and mud and blasted destruction.

One is bitterly reminded of those princes and ladies of long ago who, when their city was visited by plague, retreated to a palace in the hills and there remained feasting and story-telling, leaving the less fortunate to die unsuccoured. In truth, Boccaccio's gallants were but slothful cowards.

It seemed a cruel but a just comparison—"A land where all things always seemed the same!" We knew that day after day we awoke in a clear sunlit world, day after day to look out upon the untroubled blue of the sea, to bask among the roses of a happy valley, with, it had seemed, the certainty of all we could desire, and we knew enough of war to know what had been happening during these days beyond our Paradise. We knew that others, our friends, had been fighting for more than their lives against overwhelming odds: fighting night and day without sleep or food or shelter; marching till they dropped from weariness, with no certainty in life except that always they must turn again and fight . . . and fight.

What wonder that this evening Paradise is shaken—and that the Lotos-Eaters are ashamed?

Out of the gloom of the trees the child's voice rings happily again: "You can't catch me! You can't catch me!"—and then, penitently, "Oh, I'm *so* sorry! I quite forgot; but you *will* be able to run again one day, won't you?"

"Rather"—a man's voice answered—"like anything. That's what we're all here for, you know. We're all ugly old crooks now with bent legs and bent arms and holes in our bodies—and minds too. So they've sent us to heaven for a bit just to get mended. You see, broken soldiers are no good at all: the paint's all rubbed off, and some can't stand and some have got no heads and some no feet, so they can't fight till they've been mended; but when they've been properly mended, they're just as good as new."

"Are you being properly mended?"

"Yes."

"Is this heaven then?"

"Yes."

Dead silence for a minute; then, "Well, let's play at me being an angel—you might *walk* after me and find me, mightn't you? Here's your stick."

Thank God! Paradise is restored.

II. OVER THE TOP.

To those who love mountains and hills their charm seems to assume very different forms and to appeal to a variety of tastes. Some, indeed a great number, will tell you that they like to look *at* them: they admire their shapes, they consider any landscape without hills as somewhat incomplete. Others regard them as a kind of Nature's grand stand, and will go to the top of a mountain or hill for the view of the country beneath—or they love them for their own scenery and like to take a "walk in the hills."

There is, too, the less romantic person who loves hills for the sake of his gross body—for the bracing air, and healthiness, and good soil: he will advise an expedition to the mountains on very much the same grounds that St Paul advised wine.

Lastly, there is that stiff-necked generation to whom a mountain is first and foremost an obstacle—an obstacle to be surmounted. They must get to the top of it even (and generally) at the peril of their lives. This accomplished, they are happy: they feel that they have acquired merit, though often enough they find it difficult to explain how or why, or in what their satisfaction lies. Not certainly in having risen at an unearthly hour, nor in having been half frozen or half baked, nor in having clung through long eternities to absurdly inadequate ledges. Nor is it pleasure at having enjoyed some wonderful view — they were probably far too exhausted to think of anything but the next hold or whether the rope was sound. Yet great men have climbed great mountains just for this strange desire to acquire merit. No doubt they hold some mysterious secret — though to the ordinary man it seems that the surmounting of any great obstacle or difficulty would satisfy their ambitions equally well, with, perhaps, more profit to their fellow-men.

But with most lovers of hills and mountains is it not, first and foremost, their sense of mystery that is appealed to? Or, if you will, their curiosity? The knowledge that the hills with their woods or their winding valleys hold secrets, the suspicion that the range of mountains is hiding something—new views, a strange country, the unknown?

Surely this is the strongest charm of the hills—the expectation of a new country beyond, the old, old desire to "look over the top" and "to see round the corner." For me at least it is that mysterious Country Beyond which will ever lure me to the hills.

. . . . . .

It seems absurd to say that Paradise can ever pall; equally absurd to tell the stay-at-home in England that his heart could ever weary of blue skies and sunshine. Yet ask the man

who has spent even one hot-weather in the plains, and he will tell you things you never guessed about grey days and cloudy skies and the sound of rain and the breath of cold winds. Also he may, as it were, throw a new light on blue skies and sunshine!

Not that it was as bad as that with us: and yet we felt we needed a change from Paradise, where the blue sea and the blue sky had looked just the same for a month past and never a breath of wind had stirred the sunny air. Round about the rocks, primrose and grey, raised their jagged points against a darker blue, and swept round on either side to clasp the blue waters of the bay. Our Paradise was walled by mountains—and beyond?

The old desire had tempted us: we would go and "look over the top."

No doubt the ideal journey would have been made on foot so that we (who are most emphatically hill-lovers) could have strayed from the path and sampled the charms of many valleys. But unfortunately, "owing to the war," none of us can walk uphill, and most of us are none too good on the flat: so walking was voted out of the question. There remained the "Tramway," a light railway which by excruciating feats of clinging to precipices and curling round chasms reached to the top of the mountains and beyond: or, the alternative, a carriage and the Route Nationale. The tramway, on trial and inspection, was found to bump and screech horribly and to have hermetically sealed windows: no good; so it would have to be the road and a carriage.

Accordingly early one morning we set out. Our horse, even before we started, looked thin and tired; the carriage, too, we noticed, had a somewhat bony appearance, and by the time we had all our baggage on board there was nowhere in particular to sit: however, we cared for none of these things.

With furious cracks of the whip we rumbled through the narrow paved streets of the Old Town, down the Boulevard beyond, where the plane-trees had thrown a fresh green veil over the brilliant sunlight, then turning to the right we entered the valley which would lead us up to the pass and over the hills.

Paradise, we thought, had never looked so lovely. On either side and before us rose the walls of steep mountain, immense masses of orange and grey rocks piled high against the clearest sky: looking back, we could see the blue shimmer of the sea, and as we climbed higher the town beneath came into sight. Bathed in misty sunlight, it lay with its green gardens close about it on the edge of the blue bay. It was as though we were looking down on a city built of pearl beside a sea of turquoise.

The road we were following wound along the mountain-side, climbing gradually all the way, so that with one bony horse it was a long business:

early in the journey we had dropped to a walk, and for the next three hours we plodded and creaked our way upwards. The scenery at this pace changed very gradually, but in time the valley began to narrow noticeably, terraced gardens became fewer, the orange-trees and then the olives were left behind, and the dark ranks of the pine-woods swung down to meet us. As we climbed higher we could look down on to the lower hills and spurs and count the villages that crowned them, each one a fort in itself, with narrow arched streets and barred windows, built to be held against an enemy: each a watch-tower, whence in the old days they looked out to sea for a sight of the Saracen ships. War is written all over this countryside—its history is feud and murder, cold steel and fire: yet now, when all the rest of the world seems to be fighting, there is perfect peace here and one forgets war.

Above us, beyond the pine-belts, the flanking mountains looked wild and forbidding, bare expanses of loose stones and tumbled rock, ending in jagged fantastic spires which appeared to be crowding ever closer and closer upon us: indeed, by now the valley had become only a crack in the hills, and yet there was still no sign of the pass.

But suddenly we saw what we had been looking for. We had been tediously negotiating an immense shoulder where the valley took a bend to the right, and on at last rounding the corner we found our goal in sight—or rather, our first objective. The valley opened out a little, and directly ahead of us we saw a long low saddle between the towering cliffs; midway upon the saddle lay a castellated village gleaming in the sun. Above, the long straight skyline ran like a knife-edge across the blue—without a doubt it was the edge of the Beyond.

The two miles of straight pull up to the village passed quickly enough, a clatter through the cobbled streets—and then a dark archway confronted us. We saw, with some apprehension, that this was the mouth of a tunnel, and into its evil-smelling gloom we immediately trundled, as though such subterranean expeditions were the most natural things in the world. It was damp and very dark, but we were comforted by a faint spark of light in the far distance: gradually this grew brighter. Then the rough sandstone walls could be seen stretching in ghostly perspective before us, and then the point of light gradually took shape as another archway. Almost immediately we had driven out into the sunlight, and found ourselves in the Country Beyond.

Or had the curtain been raised before a scene in Fairyland?

At any rate, the change was a bit of sheer magic. Vanished was the world of narrow twisted valleys, with their

rugged cliffs and yellow rocks: vanished the bare slopes, the dark forests of the pines, the clinging stunted bushes, the grimly overhanging peaks and stony gullies: in their place we saw a new country, large and wide and open to the wind. Below us lay a broad valley. To the right a shoulder of the hill, down which ran the road, hid the view, but directly beneath the valley widened into a little plain, where, through level meadows, ran a sparkling river. Beyond the river, in the far distance, half encircling this plain, rose the most perfect range of mountains we had ever seen.

It was as though some great giant had taken a handful of violet petals, crushed them into an immense heap, and thrown them down upon the green earth. And above their purple shone a snow-line, dazzlingly, incredibly white against a pale-blue sky: range upon range, peak upon peak, it seemed to stretch for ever, touched here and there by sudden tints of pink and gold.

Along the whole of this prospect the green fields of the plain sloped gently up from the river, merging gradually into the distant hills, so that it was impossible to say where exactly green ended and faintest purple began: there was a misty region of golden half-lights.

So we saw "over the top": and then began our descent.

After much winding of a handle, which apparently securely locked all four wheels, our cocher dealt the bony horse shrewd blows with the whip, and thereupon we started our long skid into the valley below. An hour's twisting and turning down the steep road brought us ever new aspects of this perfect view, and anon to our goal—the Hôtel du Midi in the little town where we were to stay.

We had taken the precaution of telegraphing our intentions beforehand, and found Madame, surrounded by a crowd of interested children, awaiting us on the doorstep. She received us with smiles, it is true, but also with many apologies, for she said there was nothing to eat and no one to help her with the house—through her apologies ran a refrain, "C'est la guerre," accompanied by a stony look of fatalism: by now we knew that look and that refrain so well.

Nothing to eat sounded ominous, but an excellent *déjeuner* of omelette, bread and cheese, and bottled beer set our fears at rest; indeed, we discovered later that there was plenty of food in the district, particularly farther afield.

That afternoon we found in the town plenty to explore, from a wonderful Roman bridge with a medieval gate-house in the middle to narrow streets, dark and damp as cellars, where every house boasted a splendid arched doorway. The carving was chipped and black with age, but beyond lay dim vaulted halls where chickens fluttered between the pillars or pecked among the dirty straw littering the stone pavements. The

Place, we found, was the site of a temple of Diana: the raised platform still remained perfect, the carved capitals of pillars lay in odd corners, and on either side rose tall, newly-green plane-trees, as if they would succeed to the fallen columns and do their goddess honour; through the green aisle of trees one looked far down the valley to the blue mountains beyond.

It is a town with a history, though very few can tell it. Under the Romans there was a great market here, and the villas of rich men stood near by about the lower hills: it was a place of prosperity, we know, though the details are forgotten. Later the Saracens came to sack and burn what remained; and then later, in the Middle Ages, the town grew up again to flourish awhile as a seat of learning, with its college and library and bishop's palace. Nothing now remains but the old bridge and the palazzi hidden in the dark alleys, and that sylvan temple of Diana whither the goats clamber up from the river's grassy banks.

That April afternoon the little town seemed strangely quiet, as though its great age weighed heavily upon it; even the square, where stand four fountains in a row, was deserted except for a very old woman and two babies—*c'est la guerre.*

If we had crossed the mountains for a change of skies we were soon rewarded, for that evening the snow-peaks were hidden by clouds which rolled lower and lower towards us; next morning we awoke to find a misty rain drifting through the valley and the mountains almost hidden from view. Strange though it may seem, we found the prospect quite inviting, and decided that our occupation should fit the weather. We had heard a rumour, now confirmed by our hostess, that the river held trout; so soon after breakfast we set out armed with rods and fly-boxes to see what we could do.

As far as appearances went, we found the river all that could be desired. The stream was about twelve yards broad a little way above the town, running in a bed of shining pebbles. There were tempting pools, long stretches of smooth, swiftly-flowing water, big rocks with seductive back-washes, rapids where the foam splashed and boiled; here and there trees formed shady tunnels. We squelched through the irrigated meadows and, sitting on a low stone wall, began to put up our rods. A youth—evidently a shepherd and the first young man we had seen—leant on his long staff and, puffing an immense carved pipe, watched us. But he shook his head sadly. His first speech was Italian, but he soon changed to French—a kind of French—and told us that it was no good: our canes were too fragile. As for that bit of tin (a small spoon), it would assuredly frighten the little fish; why not try worms? But our souls were above worms—we were too proud;

consequently we tried everything else—spoons, minnows, a dozen different flies — and caught nothing at all.

But what a day it was! The soft white mist rolling through the valley, the green fields beside the jade-coloured river, the occasional vision of vast hills beyond; we returned late and wet and weary, but full of content. To be a fisherman perhaps one must be something of a philosopher—or is it *vice versâ?*

Next day the morning broke in mist and clouds again, but before we had boarded the unique local conveyance which was to take us up the valley there were patches of blue sky and a silvery sunlight touching the few visible peaks. We drove along above the river for some miles until it began to enter the hills by an immense gorge, when we left our rickety carriage and scrambled down the cliffs to the river bank. As far as sport was concerned the last day's programme was repeated: we wandered through the narrow fields, which here separated the stream from the sheer walls of the gorge, trying all the likely-looking places. The meadows were dotted with peach-trees, masses of fresh blossom; the banks, the sunny sides of walls, were starred with periwinkles, violets, and primroses, and here and there among the trees on the bank green shoots of lilies of the valley showed through last year's leaves. Perhaps we forgot about the fish.

Soon after midday the sun broke through the clouds, and sitting on a stone wall near a blossoming peach-tree, we ate our sandwiches; at our feet the river sparkled and crooned, and high above us, framed by the dark walls of the gorge, we saw the towering silver peaks above a grey veil of clouds. And then and there we swore a solemn oath that one day we would return here. We would return and walk for many a mile until we reached those distant mountains; and on our own feet we would climb up to that silver skyline until we reached the snowy summit and could "look over the top" to the new Country Beyond.

But not yet: *c'est la guerre*, and we have all to be "properly mended."

III. NIGHTINGALE VALLEY.

Under a green-painted iron bridge over which trams rattle and screech, a stream trickles down on the last few yards of its journey; a long journey, beginning far off in the hills and ending in the still blue sea out there, just beyond the public gardens.

A mountain stream flowing into the Mediterranean—yes, certainly; but there must be no illusions, no implication of idyllic scenery which such a description may seem to suggest.

For, standing here on the iron bridge, you look down a narrow bricked channel and

see the stream disappear under a culvert; beyond are the Public Gardens crowded with dusty palms and empty chairs, and then the stream disappears again through a small brick arch and trickles into the sea. You will probably mistake it for a main drain and thank heaven that at least the Mediterranean is blue in spite of man.

Look up-stream from the bridge and the prospect is not much more inviting. The banks are blue-glazed brick, the pebbly bed is littered with old rags and refuse, and the water itself covered with a scum of soap-suds from the pools where the laundresses wash the linen: a few hundred yards and the steep sides of the channel turn off sharply and houses shut out the view. But in the distance behind a jumble of red roofs and plane-trees there is a glimpse of purple mountains and a far-off country whence no doubt the stream flows: it must be very different there.

If you continue to sit in the tram that clangs over the iron bridge until it reaches its terminus you will find yourself at Monte, and there you can lunch at the Hôtel de Paris and win a fortune at the tables in the Casino, and hear a perfect orchestra discourse enchanting music, and walk on the terrace and say good-morning to all the lovely ladies. We all know the attractions of Monte, and we nearly all of us wait till the tram reaches its terminus: after all there is very little in this main-drain stream to make any one get out at the iron bridge.

But one day happening to catch that glimpse of the distant mountains, I realised, suddenly, that somewhere there, up one of those half-hidden valleys, must be the beginnings of the dingy little canal, the starting-place of the journey which ended in a drain-pipe under the Public Gardens: it seemed only fair to investigate.

So it was that we started to explore and discovered Nightingale Valley. We turned to the right beyond the iron bridge, up a lane, where over the high walls on either side, mottled with rich purples and reds and browns, hung cascades of wistaria in the fresh beauty of spring; here and there were gates, their side-posts and scroll-worked lintels covered with primrose or pink plaster, and through these appeared glimpses of gardens, the broad fronds of palms and bright varnished leaves of orange-trees. Gradually the big gardens, the region of villas, was left behind as the road wound upward, and looking to the left we saw that we were skirting a valley with orange and lemon trees growing below; farther on across a bend in the valley the olives showed like a belt of jade-green foam against the hills. To the right of the road there were terraced gardens, each terrace carefully revetted with stones and only broad enough to support a single line of small lemon trees: it seemed hardly worth while—so much

labour for such small result, so much careful building to hold up each little plot of earth.

But the next turn in the road put a stop to further rumination on the subject, for coming round a sharp corner the mysterious country, which we had half expected, was revealed.

The valley narrowed suddenly, and left and right the hills towered up till they threw against a blue sky their jagged pinnacles of rock, orange and primrose and lavender-grey near at hand, mauve and deep purple in the distance. It was as if to the immense bold form of those piles of scarred cliffs the colour had been added on the same plan, by the same artist, and no less boldly; but striving after some immense effect which brooked no timid touch, he had flung his gold and blue and purple to riot in the flaming sunlight.

Then looking downward into the depths of the narrow valley the world changed again: it was all on a gentler, smaller scale, less grand and inspiring perhaps, but at the same time more peaceful, more intelligible. In the shadow was the dusky gloom of olive groves, a hint of evil and crabbed age in their twisted trunks, but beneath them and in the sunlight shone the lighter foliage of ash and wild cherry, and here and there a patch of grassy bank. Then farther down again grew a tangle of bushes and clumps of reeds and tall grasses, and among them tumbling over shining rounded pebbles, was a friend whom we had all but forgotten —the stream, now a chain of clear brown pools and little silvery waterfalls, its edges smothered in flowers and grass and ferns. And as we stood there looking down at it—it sounds almost too good to be true—we heard three sweet long-drawn notes and a nightingale burst into song: the song of songs, the sweetest music in the world.

It was still early in the morning, and only noon when, after some hours' drive, we reached a village: but from the moment when we first found the stream again, we were never out of sound of a nightingale's song — up and down and across the valley they called and answered, till all the world seemed full of their music.

In time the valley forks and the road winds up to a little village perched on the top of the dividing spur: it is a village like hundreds of others in this country, half a fort, with narrow winding tunnels for streets, strange dark alleys with a dozen arches in the space of fifty yards, the windows guarded by bars, and the doors solid and studded with iron. Such places can have changed very little in the last five hundred years, since the times when the Lascaris and their friends and enemies fought and stabbed and plotted behind these walls.

The only open space is the Place, shaded by a giant elm, round which runs a stone bench: we found the Place crowded with children and

donkeys and old women—and one of these it was who directed us to the "Café de New York." There, sitting on a terrace which looked down into the valley, we sat, and fed upon an excellent omelette and fierce *vin ordinaire*, while a nightingale sang below, and the children and the donkeys stood round and watched. The toothless grandmamma, our hostess, appeared later, and mumbled angrily till her granddaughter appeared as interpreter and said she was asking for the news—they had not seen a paper for two days, and one was anxious now; who could forget the war with one's man and three brothers "là bas"? She pointed down the valley to where, away in the distance, glimmered the silver and blue of the Mediterranean: that was the World to them, though it was far beyond the purple crags behind her, the "là bas" where her boys were fighting.

It was late evening when we turned back down the valley: behind us the towering rocks stood out against a golden sky, while in front the sea stretched to the horizon, dark-blue as lapis-lazuli.

Before we had reached the end of the journey the short twilight had ended and the stars were out; the night air was full of scents, and as we passed the gardens a warm wind came up from the sea, heavy with the scent of orange flowers: most certainly the same scent that blew from Circe's isle. I am glad it was quite dark when we turned the corner at the end of the lane, and heard a tram come thundering up to the iron bridge: even though it was quite dark, we did not look down as we crossed the bridge and rumbled over that dingy canal—we couldn't bear to see it end like that.

But over green-painted iron bridges one may come to Nightingale Valleys in this part of the world; perhaps in other parts too.

H. R.

THE LONG TRAIL.

BY PAUL BEWSHER.

"Above the hostile lands I fly,
And know, O Lord, that Thou art nigh:
And with Thy ever-loving care
Dost bear me safely through the air.

Thou madest the twinkling Polar Star,
Which guides me homewards from afar;
And Thou hast made my greatest boon,
The radiant visage of the moon."

—*A Night Hymn.* Written sixty miles beyond the German lines.

EARLY in the war it became necessary to destroy a railway bridge some way behind the German lines. This structure was an important link in the enemy's lines of communication, and its destruction was of vital importance. The work was given to one of the very early squadrons to accomplish, and it was carried out in rather an unusual way.

From the moonlit aerodrome there rose into the quiet night a little two-seater B. E. 2 C. machine, with a pilot and an observer as the crew. Soon this humming-bird of the darkness was winging its steady way across the German front lines, and met as opposition only the scattered and inaccurate firing of machine-gunners and riflemen on the ground.

The observer closely compared his lamp-lit chart, and the pale map of the moonlit country below him. With unerring certainty the airmen moved across field and forest, farm and village, till they saw some distance ahead of them the gleam of a silver streak of water. As they drew nearer they saw the shining curves of a river, across which, at one point, lay a straight black line. It was their bridge.

At once the noise of the engine ceased and the machine began to sink gently on softly singing wires towards the ground. Bigger grew the woods, wider the thin white roads, deeper the soft and velvety shadows. Over the tops of some trees they floated. The rolling expanse of a field rose up to them. The machine quivered and jerked, and soon was rolling softly along the grass. Before it had stopped the observer had jumped out, and he hurriedly lifted a bulky package from his cockpit. He waved to the pilot. He heard the sudden roar of the engine, and the machine slipped faster and faster across the field and rose up towards the stars, leaving him alone on the ground in the midst of his enemies, many long miles from his own lines.

Quickly he ran to the edge of a wood, and he was soon creeping silently through the dim lattice-work of moonlight

and rippling shadows. In a little while he heard the soft murmur of rapid waters, and he came to the edge of the river. He followed its course for a time, threading his way through the trees near the bank. When he could see the bridge some two hundred yards away he slipped into the river, and, wading waist-high in the water, with his precious packet held well above the surface, he moved slowly and silently toward the moonlit arches of stone.

Above him he could now hear the hum of his machine, and he saw it sweep overhead quite low down. It turned rapidly and dived down straight towards the bridge, and he heard the *pok, pok, pok* of its machine-gun. With a great rush of sound it roared upwards again and banked steeply almost above him. Now he could hear the noise of an approaching train, and he saw the restless machine, whose pilot was deliberately distracting the attention of the sentries by his acrobatics and the noise of his engine, dive towards it. There was a sudden flash of light and a very loud detonation. The pilot had released one of his bombs. Then once more sounded the metallic hammering of his machine-gun.

Meanwhile the observer had reached the base of one of the stone piers which supported the bridge. The excited sentries had not noticed his presence, and now he was safely hidden in the gloom of the arch. With the water swirling round his waist he worked feverishly to remove one of the stones. At last it was loosened sufficiently to be withdrawn. In its place he put his precious packet, which was a charge of high explosive. This he secured firmly in position, and then, having set the fuse, he began to return, through the water, to his starting place. Another swift flash illuminated the leaves of the riverside bushes. It was followed by a second thundering explosion, as another bomb burst near the crowded troop train which still had not crossed the bridge.

In a few minutes he clambered up the bank and hurried through the magic beauty of the moonlit wood. He reached the edge of the field where he had landed, and stood waiting. He looked at the luminous face of his watch. The pilot was going to allow him fifteen minutes. Fourteen had passed. He knew his friend would not fail him whatever happened, so though he stood, soaking wet and alone, surrounded by the now angry enemy, he did not feel at all alarmed.

Overhead he heard the drone of the engine, which suddenly stopped, to be followed by the faint, scarcely-heard hiss of the wires as the machine began to glide downwards to the ground. Soon a shadowy shape moved swiftly across the ground and stopped. The observer ran over to it and climbed quickly into his seat. He shouted to the pilot of the success of his operation, and then with a roar and rush was borne upwards,

and to his relief found himself flying swiftly once more through the friendly air.

Even as they turned to start on their long homeward journey a great sullen roar rose to them from below, and they saw that no more across the silver streak of the river lay a black line, for now it was obscured by a cloud of smoke, which slowly dissipated and revealed a great gap in the bridge, near which was the red glow of the locomotive that no longer could take forward its carriages loaded with troops destined for a now impossible railhead.

That happened in the early days of the war. Swiftly developed the powerful arm of the air. Great were the changes in thought. Mighty the new weapons of destruction. . . .

"C.O. wants to see you at once in the Mapping Office."

It is four o'clock on September 29, 1917.

I hurry to the little hut by the mess and pass through the door. Over the long desk leans the grave-faced squadron commander, the great pioneer of night-bombing. With a pencil and a ruler he carefully studies a map.

"Is that you, Bewsher?" he says. "Look here. I want you to go to Namur to-night; do you think you can do it?"

"I think so, sir."

"Well! Look! It is a hundred and twenty miles the other side of the lines. There is a big railway bridge there—the Luxembourg bridge—here—see. That is the only railway bridge for a hundred miles of the river. If it is put out of action the German lines of communication are badly broken. The Army H.Q. are very keen on it. It is a great chance for the squadron—and a great chance for you. Brackley will be the pilot. You had better go to see him. How are you going to find the way?"

"Know the way up to Ghent, sir; shall go by landmarks after that!"

"Hum! Take my advice and fly by the compass, and only use landmarks as a check! Well, you will see!"

Now ensues three frantic hours of activity. I hurry off to see Brackley, who has just returned from leave, and at twelve o'clock was in Dover. The time of preparation is one series of kaleidoscopic pictures—of crawling inside a machine unfamiliar to either of us: of being taught the operation of a new petrol pressure system: of watching the loading of the four huge 250-lb. bombs, fat and yellow, which I have never before had the opportunity of dropping: of drawing a line from Dunkerque to Ghent, from Ghent to Namur, across the long green-and-brown map: of pondering the patches of the forests, the blue veins of the river, and thinking how in a few hours they will appear for me in reality, lying below in the moonlight, etched in dim shades of black and dull silver: of a strange dinner in the mess when semi-seriously, semi-facetiously I write

out my will, leaving to one friend my books, to another friend my pictures: of having the document properly witnessed, and rushing out amidst cries of good luck: of the lonely dressing in leather and fur in my little hut: of the roar of the engines as we rise up at latest twilight towards the glittering companies of the stars.

It is a quarter to eight. Eight thousand feet above the coast near Dunkerque we move. My pilot is a senior officer, and I have never flown with him before, so I sit quietly and do not talk, as I watch carefully the dials of my petrol instruments, and also keep a careful eye on the country below. The pilot looks at the engines with a satisfied glance, and the machine swings round and points east.

Soon the dim pattern of the Dixmude floods lie below, reflecting the gleam of a quivering star-shell. In the sky above Thorout appears a dazzling Very's light which drifts and dies—German machines are abroad in the darkness also. Far below now lies Thorout, and for a minute or two its pale beam waves vainly and impotent in the moonlit sky, its strength so dissipated that it is useless. Soon south of Ghent we move, and see to our right the landing lights of the huge Gotha aerodrome of Gontrode.

I stand up and look across the pilot, and count the lights.

"Eight on each side—two red at the west!" I say.

"I make it more," he comments. "Count again!"

I make sure of my accuracy, and draw in my notebook a detailed sketch of the landing arrangements.

"Look!" cries suddenly the pilot. "We've been heard!"

I peer down once more and see only the two red lights glowing on the ground. The two lines of white electric lamps have been switched off, for the drone of our engines has been heard high above the aerodrome.

Suddenly I realise that we will be heard through the whole of our long journey. The absence of searchlights and shell fire in these undefended regions makes one forget that from town to town, from village to village, the report of our progress is sent to a thousand military centres in a vast radius. Already our passage into virgin territory (for not for years has country east of Ghent been bombed at night) must be causing a sensation. Brussels must be apprehensive: Aix-la-Chapelle is feeling anxiety: Cologne is uneasy.

Now ahead of us I can see what never before have I seen—the lights of villages shining clearly in scintillating groups here and there across the pale moonlit country. With my map on my knees I pick up and check every railway and cross-road and forest below me in turn, and manage to keep the machine exactly over the line marked on the map.

"We're all right, sir!" I say to the pilot. "See this straight

road on the map. There it is —there—see! See that forest crossing it—well—there it is! I am quite sure of our position. We come to a river soon . . . look! look! do you see it—that silver streak over there?"

The pilot nods, looks at my map, and turns on the bright engine lights in order to examine the dials. To my slight discomfort he leaves them on as he flies ahead, evidently feeling confident of our safety.

Far ahead I can see a light flashing and flashing in a regular code. I presume it to be near Brussels, and point it out to the pilot. In a few minutes through the slight haze of the distance appears a great number of twinkling lights, and soon, to our left, I see a vast sea of glittering, shimmering gems, with lines of lights radiating outwards from it like the tentacles of an octopus. I suddenly realise that it is Brussels, and with a cry of utter delight, stand up to look down more clearly at it. It is a wonderful spectacle. There, in one wide sweep before my eyes, lies the whole city, triumphantly blazing out into the night. I can see the long lines of the boulevards stretching through the mass of lights, on the outskirts of which glitter little villages from which also radiate the lines of street lamps, as though illuminated starfish lay here and there across the country. *Brussels—Brussels* beats through my brain as I see the Belgian capital, feeling safe in its remoteness from the lines, flaming bravely in the darkness. I live through one of those rare moments of divinity which come to men when they see before them for the first time some sublime spectacle which perhaps has never been seen before.

In the middle of the town there flashes an aerial lighthouse. This is rather puzzling, as the German night-bombing aerodromes are many miles to the west, near the coast at Ghent and Bruges. I wonder for whom this light flashes and blinks. Then I suddenly realise that perhaps one of the infrequent Zeppelin raids is being carried out against England on this wonderfully clear night.

Brussels passes. Road and forest and village flow beneath us in a regular and expected stream. Slowly the minutes go by. Ten minutes to ten says the watch. For over two hours we have been in the air, and our engines show no signs of wavering. On them alone now depend our chances of return. Soon I see far ahead of me the silver ribbon of the Meuse shining in the haze of the horizon, and then the lights of Namur, cold and sparkling, appear by the side of the river. I examine every tiny landmark on the ground below, and check it with my map. There is no doubt. There lie the lights of the town—there lies the forest on its outskirts—there lie the two bridges, from one of which the thin black line of the railway trails off into the distance.

"Namur!" I say to the pilot.

He looks down and flies

round in a wide circle in order to examine every point, and to ensure for himself that no doubt whatever exists as to the identity of the place. He is quite satisfied, and turns the machine towards the south-east. We cross the river south of the town, as I explain to him my intentions. I want him to turn north-west, against wind, and to throttle the engines. We will glide down parallel to the railway line, which will help me to get a good line. We will reach the bridge at a low altitude, and I will drop my bombs. We will turn quickly down wind to escape.

Before I crawl into the back I point out to him some very bright lights in the direction of the Namur Zeppelin sheds, which seem to confirm my supposition of the activity of German airships to-night. Then, with a final word of explanation, I stoop through the door behind my seat and lie on the floor of the machine. I slide open the little trap-door beneath the pilot's seat, and see a small square picture of moonlit country. Ahead there is just visible the curve of the river, and the black line of the bridge across it. Beneath me runs the railway track which is to be my guide. To my joy I can see, at one place upon this thin dark line, the intermittent red glowing of an engine's fire-box. In a swift moment I realise the actuality of the country below. For a second it ceases to be a map and becomes peopled with busy human beings. Oh, Namur (think I), ablaze with lights, you enjoy this moonlight night of late September, far, far from the turmoil of war, little conscious that overhead this very moment lies a fur-clad airman peering down at you, preparing to drop his terrific missiles, packed with fierce explosive! Laugh on in your cafés, you exquisitely-clad German ambusqués! For me this moment is rich and ecstatic. Then the difficulty of the task absorbs my mind. The noise of the engines has ceased. Through the machine sounds the faint rush of wind hissing and sighing round the tight-strung wires and planes as we sink lower and lower. My bomb-sight draws nearer and nearer to the bridge. Pressing the buttons of the direction indicator I steer the machine to right and left, as green or red glow the lights before the eyes of the pilot. The direction bar touches the bridge and drifts off to the left. I swing the machine round quickly, again the bar crosses the bridge, again it drifts off. We are flying slightly side to wind, and I can scarce keep the head of the machine on a straight course. The pale-glowing range-bars draw nearer and nearer, with a slow progression, to the black edge of the silver river. Again I press the right button; again a green light glows; again the machine swings towards the bridge. The range-bars cross the base of it. I press over the bomb handle quickly, . . . and again. Clatter-click-clatter-click-click-clatter sound the open-

ing and closing bomb doors behind me as bomb after bomb slides out into the moonlight depths below. For a moment I see the fat yellow shapes, clear-lit in the pale light beneath me, go tumbling down and down towards the dim face of the country.

I hurry back to my seat beside the pilot.

"Half dropped, sir. 'Fraid they will not get it. Oh! I am sorry, sir! I am sorry! We drifted!"

One, two, three red flashes leap up in the water of the river some hundred yards to the south of the bridge. One, two more flashes, more rapid and brilliant, leap up on the moonlight embankment, leaving large white clouds of smoke.

"Jolly good! You didn't miss by much!" he says encouragingly.

Boom—boom—BOOM—boom BOOM! sound the five explosions as we turn. It is strange to look at Namur—still sparkling beautifully with a wealth of light under the stars—still unchanged, though we know that the thundering clamour of these five unexpected explosions must have stirred up the placid life of the little tranquil town till it is seething like an ant-hill upset by the wayside. In the squares and streets must run the alarmed population, rushing to and fro aimlessly, utterly terrified. In the military headquarters the telephones and telegraphs must have burst into a sudden activity. The vibrant roar of the explosions must have been heard for a great distance. Even in remote Aix-la-Chapelle the strolling Germans must have wondered at the remote sound drifting to them under the stars.

Again we fly to the south: again we turn and start on our second "run" over the target: again I crawl into the back, steeled this time by a great anxiety and a great determination, for I realise the enormous responsibility which is mine. With the five remaining bombs behind me I have, if possible, to destroy the great railway bridge, which to me will appear only a small black match laid across the silver ribbon of the river. If the bridge is destroyed or damaged the German communications will be vitally interfered with, the moving of their troops will be interrupted, the pressure on the British lines will be relieved. If I fail, that much-desired relief will not take place, and therefore many more British soldiers may be killed. That is not all, however—for failure means that this expensive raid is wasted; the reputation of the squadron is tarnished; the official approval of Handley-Pages as long-distance night-bombers is reversely affected; and, least of all, though of great importance to myself, my splendid opportunity for a great achievement is lost. With this sense of responsibility weighing heavily on me I lie down, peering through the little square hole. My face is wet with the perspiration of anxiety in spite of

the intense cold of the biting wind: my hands shake with excitement. I decide to take the machine to the river along the railway line, and slightly to the east of it, and then to judge the wind drift so that the machine is turned by it to the left, when I will press the starboard signal button and swing the machine at an angle across the bridge, and then drop my bombs. It is a great risk, and unless I judge exactly I will not succeed.

In a fever of apprehension, and with my whole being concentrated on the relation of the fine wires and bars of my bomb-sight with the black thread of the railway far below me, I lie on the varnished strips of wood on the floor of the machine, my legs flung wide apart behind me, my bare hands and face frozen with the icy blast of wind, my uncovered eyes running with water. Nearer and nearer to the bridge draw the two range bars. Gently and rarely do I touch the starboard signal button, to swing the machine again and again to the right as the wind drifts it to the left. We are near the bridge —we are almost over it. I press the starboard button determinedly, and I see the glow of green light illuminate the dashboard. To the right swings the machine. White glows a light as I press the central button. I look below quivering with anxiety. The machine ceases its leftward drift and swings to the right, and the two luminous range-bars are in line with the bridge. I grasp the bomb-handle and once, twice, press it over. I look behind—the bombs are all gone. It is all over! The irrevocable deed has been done! The failure or success of the long raid is sealed. I climb clumsily to my feet and look through the door beside the pilot.

"All gone, sir, I . . . Oh! look, *look!*"

Upon the thin black line of the bridge leap out two great flashes, leaving a cloud of moonlit smoke which entirely obscures one end of it.

"Oh — damn good — damn good!" yells out the pilot excitedly. "Hit it! *Hit it!* You've hit it! Oh—priceless —priceless!"

"Good—oh, sir! I am glad. It is hit, isn't it, sir? Two of them. I *am* bucked!"

Almost crying with joy we shake hands, and he thumps me cheerfully on the back.

"Something for you for this when we get back!" he says. "Oh! damn good—damn good, Paul. Priceless—priceless!"

I look round, and in the back of the machine I see a sight which left the clearest image of this raid in my mind. There stands the moonlit figure of the tall good-humoured gun-layer, and with a characteristic gesture I see him put out his arms with the thumbs pointing upwards—the most sincere expression of congratulation he can deliver. My heart goes out in gratitude to this solitary man who already, for nearly three hours, has stood alone on a thin platform in the back of the machine, watching and

eager, knowing that he has no control over his destiny, that his life lies in the hands of the little figure whose black head he can see so far away from him in the nose of the machine.

Now we turn at once and start on our long homeward trail. Exhilarated with a glorious feeling of success, so contented and glowing with joy that I am not affected by the fact of being over a hundred miles from friendly territory, I sit on my seat with legs gaily swinging, and read Dickens, write letters and verses, drink tea and eat sandwiches, and chatter incessantly to the pilot, who, in his satisfaction, does not mind.

"You'll get something for this—if we cross the lines all right!" he says with his usual restrained optimism.

Charleroi sparkles on our left. Near it at La Louvière flashes an aerial lighthouse, whose presence I record on my note-book. Having found our way to Namur by map, we seem to return by a curious kind of homing instinct. We know where we are as if by second nature. Indeed so little do I trouble that I mistake Courtrai for Roulers, but it makes but little difference. Such confidence have I in our safety, so lovely is the moon-drenched night, so friendly are the undefended skies, that we fly on and on as in a stupor of utter bliss. We know that if we return we are famous, and we know we will return. Song and laughter and rich thoughts of far-distant London and its proffered glories when next comes leave, fill my drowsy brain. I hug the pilot's arm affectionately. At twelve o'clock he was at Dover, now scarcely eleven hours after he is coming back from Namur. How wonderful it is—how wonderful he is!

Ypres flickers to the left with its ever uneasy artillery fire. In our ease we do not even trouble to cross the lines as soon as possible, but fly on parallel to them, some five miles on the German side. At last we turn and cross slowly over the white blossoms of the ever-rising, ever-drooping star-shells.

Back towards Dunkerque we fly, and the pilot says to me—

"You did jolly well, old man. You'll get something for this—if we land safely!"

I wonder what his conditional clause will be when we are on the ground—"if you live to get it"—probably!

Soon the welcome landing T glows far below us. We fire our white light: at once the white light rises from below. "Charlie," the raid officer, is faithfully on the watch, as he must have been now for long hours, awaiting our return.

We glide downwards, and in a moment of exultation the pilot, to my everlasting regard for him, sweeps a few feet over the aerodrome, yelling with me in utter excitement—

"*Hooray! Hooray! Hooray! Hooray!*"

I lean far over the side screaming out my joy in this mad whirling rush over the

grass. On roar the engines: we sweep swiftly upwards again, and turn, and land.

As soon as the machine has stopped crowds press round us. A Ford car is waiting to take us over to the headquarters.

"Oh! Damn good," says the pilot. "We hit it—but I take no credit for it. It was this child's show—he did it!"

"Bilge! You were great, sir. I never saw such steering!"

In the jolting little car we whirl across a bridge, alongside the canal, and across a second bridge to my beloved camp, and our beloved C.O.

His words of congratulation at the news would be reward for a hundred such trips.

"Well!" he says at last, "I suppose you did it by compass!"

"No, sir! By landmarks!"

When at last I walk back alone, under the starlit sky, to my cabin, it seems utterly impossible to believe that I *have* been actually to Namur—that I have actually travelled over three hundred miles since I last walked along that path a few hours ago. It seems incredible that my soft right hand has actually this night caused damage and brought death to that far, far remote place, which even now is in a state of confusion. Vividly I realise the amazing wonder of flying; vividly I feel the strange fascination of night-bombing, with its long journeys and sense of domination—its sense of being almost divine.

Five weeks later, to the mapping office comes the intelligence report—

"*A Rapatrié reports: — On the night of September 29th Allied aircraft successfully attacked the Luxembourg bridge at Namur, which was badly damaged. 17 German civilians were killed.*"

THE STORY OF OUR SUBMARINES.—VI.

BY KLAXON.

I HAVE mentioned the fact that Submarine "A E 2" (Lieut.-Commander Stoker) was the first boat to get into the Sea of Marmora. Her experience is worth relating, especially in view of the fact that she was an Australian Navy boat, and that her trip was made simultaneously with the Gallipoli landing.

She entered the Straits at 2.30 A.M. on 25th April 1915, and continued upon the surface till, being fired on from the northern shore, she dived at 4.30 A.M., and proceeded at 70 feet depth through the mine-field. Her despatches say:—

> "During the ensuing half-hour or so the scraping of wires against the vessel's sides was almost continuous, and on two occasions something caught up forward and continued to knock for some considerable time before breaking loose and scraping away aft."

Off Chanak she torpedoed a small Turkish gunboat in passing, and dodged the stem of a torpedo-boat that attempted to ram the periscope. "A E 2" then ran aground (her compass having developed defects) under the guns of Fort Anatoli Mejidieh. She got off, and proceeded on at 90 feet, till she ran aground again on the Gallipoli shore for five minutes. This second bump damaged the hull somewhat. She got off and went on, pursued by all the miscellaneous small craft of the Narrows, all of them firing at and trying to ram her periscope. At 8.30 A.M., the pursuit being close, she intentionally ran aground on the Asiatic shore to wait, at a depth of 80 feet, till the chase should have passed on overhead. She waited there, listening to the propellers passing to and fro, until 9 P.M., when she rose and found nothing in sight. At 4 A.M. on the 26th she went on, having charged up her batteries and unsuccessfully attacked two unknown men-of-war (one of them probably the battleship *Hairedin Barbarossa*) near Gallipoli. At 9 A.M. she entered the Sea of Marmora. Unfortunately, "A E 2" carried no gun, and had to rely on her torpedo armament, which at 9.30 A.M. failed her when she endeavoured to sink a transport—one of four coming towards the Peninsula. On 27th April she had more bad luck with torpedoes, and another transport (escorted by a destroyer screen) escaped her. On the 28th another torpedo failed to hit a small ship convoyed by two T.B.D.'s, and in the evening her sixth torpedo missed on "two men-of-war approaching at high speed from westward." On the 29th, being chased by torpedo-boats and

gunboats, she was forced to fire a chance shot in order to discourage the pursuit. The torpedo missed a yard ahead of a gunboat, and "pursuit then ceased." In the evening she met "E 14" at a rendezvous, the latter boat having followed her up the Straits. On the 30th, "A E 2" met her end:—

"10.30 A.M.: Boat's bow suddenly rose, and boat broke surface about one mile from T.B. Blew water forward, but could not get boat to dive. Torpedo-boat got very close, firing, and a gunboat from Artaki Bay began firing at a range of about three miles; flooded a forward tank, when boat suddenly took a big inclination down by bows and dived rapidly. The 100-feet depth was quickly reached and passed. Went full speed astern, and commenced to blow main ballast. After some interval boat came back to 100-feet depth, so reflooded and went ahead, but boat broke surface stern first. Within a few seconds the shots fired holed the engine-room in three places. Owing to the great inclination down by the bow it was impossible to see the torpedo-boat through the periscope, and I considered that any attempt to ram her would be useless. I therefore blew main ballast, and ordered all hands on deck. Assisted by Lieut. Haggard, I then opened the tanks to flood and went on deck. The boat sank in a few minutes. . . ."

All the officers and men were saved, being picked out of the water by the Turkish torpedo-boat after "A E 2" had sunk. A lot of trips were made by submarines up the Sea of Marmora, but it was not all child's play inside or on the way up. "E 15" and "E 14" were lost in the Straits, "E 20" was torpedoed by a U-boat when off Constantinople, and "E 7" was sunk in the Chanak nets.

As was published at the time, submarine "E 13" was lost on the 18th September 1915, on Saltholm, Denmark. As a matter of fact her loss with part of the crew was part of the price paid by the Navy for the passage of E-boats into the Baltic. "E 13" was bound for Libau *vid* the Sound, and was wrecked owing to a defective compass. She was doubtful enough of the compass's accuracy for such narrow and intricate waters to have eased to 250 evolutions and to have stopped one engine when she grounded on the S.E. end of Saltholm, striking all along her length on shelving rocky bottom. She blew all tanks and began operations to get away. At 5 A.M. a Danish torpedo-boat arrived and communicated, stating that "E 13" had twenty-four hours to get herself away in, but that no assistance could be given her. . . . Then a German destroyer arrived and remained watching until two Danish torpedo-boats approached, when she left. At 9 A.M. "E 13" was still trying to move, and three Danish torpedo-boats were anchored watching her; then came two German destroyers. At half-a-mile range the leading enemy hoisted a signal and blew her syren. Before the signal could be read she was three hundred yards away, at which range she fired a torpedo and opened fire with all guns. "E 13," hit all over, caught fire at once, and Commander

Layton ordered the crew to abandon ship, telling them to take to the water and scatter as much as possible, the German fire being "Man-killing," *i.e.*, with shrapnel and machine-gun.

The Danish torpedo-boats at once got out the boats, and one torpedo-boat steamed in between the Germans and their target—this action causing the Germans to cease fire. The Germans then withdrew, having killed fifteen officers and men of "E 13" in the water. The submarine was hit about fourteen times by four-inch shells and by many of smaller calibre; she was completely destroyed. The officers and men saved were taken aboard the Danish flagship and treated with the utmost kindness. I will not comment on this incident.

Commander Layton escaped from his prison in Denmark, and returned safely to command another submarine.

I must record here the account of the escape of Stoker Petty Officer William Brown from submarine "E 41." It was an extraordinary experience for any man, but I must again point out that the submarine sailor is, in his training and sense, something out of the common.

"E 41" was acting as "target" for other boats which were practising attacks on her as training for actual war attacks on U-boats at sea. The exercising area was just off Harwich, and "E 41" was running a straight course along it, looking out for the periscope of the attacker—"E 4." Suddenly the periscope appeared—50 yards on the bow and travelling fast; "E 4" had miscalculated her attack and a collision was inevitable. "E 41" put her helm over and stopped her engines, but "E 4" came heavily against her deep down on the starboard hand. "E 4's" conning-tower was smashed, and she sank at once with all hands. "E 41's" captain was on the bridge, and receiving a report that his own boat was sinking fast, he called all hands on deck. Petty Officer Brown did not apparently hear the order, and with two other men (a stoker and engine-room artificer) went down with the boat. The conning-tower lid being open as she sank, the stoker and artificer who were in the midship compartment waited a few seconds in a pocket of air near the conning-tower ladder, and then dived for it, swimming through the boat till the gleam of brighter water showed overhead, then rising up through sixty-five feet till they gained the surface. Brown had taken shelter in the engine-room, closing the door after him. His own account of the incident is quite clear, though perhaps a little technical.

. . . "Something was heard to come in contact with the bottom of the boat forward, twice in quick succession. Immediately after the engine-room telegraph rang to 'out-clutches.' I took out the port clutch and closed the muffler valve—then it was reported that the ship was making water. I proceeded for-

ward to ascertain the position of the leak, and came to the conclusion she was holed down low. My first impulse was to close the lower door of the conning-tower. At this point the chief engine-room artificer inquired if all hands were out of the engine-room. I replied I would find out. On going aft I found one man coming forward, and I ordered him to put his life-belt on, keep his head, and wait his turn at the conning-tower hatch. Finding there was nobody else aft, I came forward and put on a life-belt and closed the valve on the air trunk through the engine-room bulkhead — then water began to come down through the conning-tower hatch and the boat took a dip forward. . . ."

From the collision to this point was actually about 90 seconds. Brown gives the impression in one's mind that he spent part of this time "tidying up" and generally giving a final polish to his department before leaving (perhaps he did):—

"I went aft and shouted to the hands forward to come aft to the engine-room. There was no response. The midship compartment was in darkness and partly flooded. Chlorine gas began to come through. I closed the engine-room door and began to unscrew the clips of the torpedo hatch above me. At this juncture the engine-room was in complete darkness, with the exception of the port pilot-lamp, which was burning through 'earth.' The water was slowly rising in the engine-room through the voice-pipes, which I had left open to relieve the pressure on the bulkhead door.

"I then proceeded to disconnect the torpedo hatch from its gearing, which meant the removal of two split pins and two pins from the links. Before the foremost one could be removed, however, I had to unship the strongback and wait till there was sufficient pressure in the boat to ease the hatch off the strongback. . . ."

It all sounds so very simple, but the man misses out a lot. It was almost pitch-dark. He was working on top of the engines of a nearly full submarine which had gone to the bottom. He was half-submerged in electrically-charged water, and chlorine gas was coming in through the voice-pipes from the batteries. The hatch he was trying to open was very heavy—well screwed down—and was over his head in a difficult position to reach.

"The heat at this time was excessive, therefore I rested awhile and considered the best means of flooding the engine-room, and eventually came to the conclusion that the best way was to flood through the stern tube or the weed-trap of the circulating system, or by dropping the exhaust and induction valves and opening the muffler-valve. I tried the stern tube first, but could neither open the stern-cap nor rear door. Then I came forward again. Whilst passing the switchboards I received several shocks. I tried to open the weed-trap of the circulating inlet, but it was in an awkward position, and with water coming over the top of me I could not ease back the butterfly-nets. So proceeded forward again and opened muffler-valve, also the test-cocks on the group exhaust-valves; tried them and found water was coming in. Then I climbed on top of the engines underneath the torpedo hatch and unshipped the strongback, drawing the pin out of the link with a spanner that I had with me. In order to flood the boat completely I opened the scuttle in the engine-room bulkhead. Chlorine gas came in as well as water. I tried three times to lift the torpedo hatch, but each time could only open it half-way, and each time air rushed out through it and the hatch fell down again. I clipped the hatch again, having to dive down to fetch the clip-bolts, and as the pressure increased again, I knocked off the clips. The hatch flew open, but not

enough to let me out. I tried to lift it again with my shoulder, but it descended on my hand. I managed to raise the hatch sufficiently to clear my hand and let it down again. Then I flooded the boat rapidly through the deadlight till the water came to the level of the coaming. I was then able to raise the hatch and come to the surface. . . ."

To put the case from the point of view of the destroyer lying above the scene of the collision, bubbles and gouts of oil and gas came up for an hour and a half after the boat had sunk. Then a man appeared swimming. He wore an air-belt, he had a smashed hand and was very done, but was full of information for the salvage party with reference to the state of the boat he had just left, such as which valves, doors, &c., were open and which were closed.

During the war the High Sea Fleet was seldom seen by any ships, submersible or otherwise, but "E 23" (Lieut.-Commander Turner) had a very good view of them on 19th August 1916.

At three o'clock in the morning, in clear weather, cloudy with no moon, she saw ships steering west by Borkum Riff. She got her tubes ready and stood in to attack on the surface. As she closed, trimmed half-down, and with every one keyed up for the shot, she saw the German battle-cruisers go by, their destroyer screen passing her at dangerously close range. As the destroyer wash dashed against the conning-tower and the resultant gleam of phosphorus indicated her presence to the enemy, she fired a beam tube at the *Seydlitz*, the leading ship. As she did so the *Seydlitz* opened on her with her secondary battery at 800 yards' range. "E 23" dived and ran down to the bottom in 140 feet to reload. The *Seydlitz* must have dodged as the boat fired, and the torpedo missed. At 3.30 A.M. "E 23" rose and saw smoke to the south-east. She attacked, diving at full speed, and made out eight battleships in single line ahead with destroyers on either bow of each ship and Zeppelins overhead. This was the *König*- and *Kaiser*-class squadron following the battle-cruisers. As they were obviously going to pass her at long range, "E 23" gave them one chance torpedo at 4000 to 5000 yards' range without success, and turned her attention to eight more battleships astern of them—viz., four *Helgoland* class, four *Nassau* class, one Zeppelin, and a destroyer screen. She fired two torpedoes at the rear ship (the *Westfalen*), hitting her with one, and making a hole 45 feet by 14 feet along her side. The destroyers turned to ram, but "E 23" was at 190 feet by the time they arrived overhead. As their propellers passed she came to periscope depth again and saw the *Westfalen* listing to starboard with her speed reduced. The damaged ship made an effort to follow her consorts, while the submarine dived westward after her; but her consorts were not waiting for lame ducks,

and they had passed on at 18 knots. The big ship turned, and with five destroyers guarding her, came back towards harbour. "E 23" fired again, and this time as she hurried down to 90 feet after the shot, heard depth-charges exploding after her. Whether she hit with the last shot or not is doubtful. In the midst of the depth-charges it is impossible to differentiate and locate a torpedo explosion. But the *Westfalen* was got home and into dock. As soon as the chase had ceased, "E 23" rose and signalled the news of the High Sea Fleet's venture to the Grand Fleet, but on the latter's approach the enemy had turned back from the mouth of the Bight and passed home by the Northern Channel. During the attack on the Fleet "E 23" had a perfect view in clear weather of all the ships, and was able to note all funnel bands and distinctive markings on them, and to recognise each unit of the great Armada as it crossed the periscope field.

The big "K" class submarines were used for scouting patrols in 1917 and 1918. This was not because we were short of boats, but because it was known that if boats don't get in sea-time they tend to become inefficient — also, perhaps it was known that we would have plenty of warning from the Intelligence Department if the High Sea Fleet moved, and so could call the "K's" home to refit in readiness if a fleet action was likely. The "K" patrols were on lines between the Bight and our coast which enemy raiders or mine-layers would be likely to cross if they came out. Except for practice dives at dawn and evening, the boats stayed on the surface all the time, zigzagging up and down their patrol lines at 17 knots. Except for occasional U-boats or our own ships nothing was seen, and the work done was like most of the patrol work of the war—very dull, but useful and necessary. The boats, however, were able to test their own behaviour in bad weather on several occasions, with the result that weak points could be eliminated or strengthened, and the design modified and made more seaworthy. A K-boat in a gale is a very handsome ship, her smooth run and fine lines slide the seas off very prettily, and if her speed is eased to suit the length of sea she rides like a cruiser. It is true that she is not comfortable in bad weather: in the boiler-room the stokers have to wear oilskins because of the water pouring down from the vents overhead, and big seas sometimes come down the funnels, causing "flashing-back" and scalding; the water tumbles down the conning-tower hatch, splashing off the control-room deck and causing "earths" on adjacent switchboards, with the result that men going up and down the conning-tower ladder are greeted with shocks as soon as they grasp the rungs.

They have a quick destroyer-like roll, and, unless going slow,

they have a trick of neglecting to lift occasionally when meeting a head sea; but they are really safe sea-boats, and if trim and speed are correctly adjusted, far more comfortable in bad weather than destroyers are. Their great advantage is in their lines, for a smooth-run hull with no obstructions deflects, instead of holding, the water. All submarines are pretty wet in a head sea, for they are heavy vessels with little buoyancy, and do not lift in time to the waves, so that a passage to windward in an E-boat, for instance, is for the men on the bridge one long cold bath, especially in the short breaking seas of the Dogger, when a boat goes butting into everything as it comes without troubling to rise to it. I have not figures to refer to, but can at any rate remember one captain, one first lieutenant, and two seamen being lost overboard at different times from boats on passage in North Sea gales during the war. The German cargo submarine *Bremen* was considerably endangered on her voyage to America by the big Atlantic seas tumbling down her conning-tower: it is considered in Germany that her loss on the homeward voyage was due to something of the sort—that the boat put her nose into a head sea, and filled before her hatch could be shut down, or she could lift again in the next hollow. In the North Atlantic there may be 500 yards of trough between the wave-crests in a gale, and a heavy submarine running down the slope would be liable to bury herself in the next great hill of water as it met her.

Many incidents must have occurred during the war of which we have now no record. The boats which were lost in the Bight "from causes unknown" may have been on their patrol billets for some time before meeting their end, and what they did and what they saw will never be known. On at least one occasion the veil has been lifted: "L 10" (Lieut.-Commander Whitehouse) was known to have been sunk by German destroyers in October last; it was after the Armistice that we heard that she had first sunk a German destroyer, "S 33," and had then herself been destroyed by the remainder of the flotilla. When we get a German account of the war at sea we may find in it here and there a belated piece of news of a missing E-boat. It is, however, believed that the enemy destroyed most of his records and despatches during the Revolution, in order to prevent what would have been, from his point of view, premature publication.

In August 1916, submarine "E 16" (Lieut.-Commander Duff-Dunbar) was lost in the Bight. She was proceeding to a billet in the enemy northern swept channel, and "E 38" was following her at about seven miles distance. Seeing smoke on the horizon ahead, "E 38" dived, but could not get within range of the enemy ships (which are known to

have been cruisers). She saw, however, splashes rise from the water near the ships as if they were firing at something, and this is confirmed by enemy reports that on that day they fired at a periscope attacking them. Firing at a periscope does not at all imply that the fire has damaged the boat, but from a vague statement by a German officer of the boat being "blown up" by the gun-fire, one can surmise that "E 16" struck a mine while attacking. Her captain was an officer who stood very high in his contemporaries' estimation, in addition to being highly thought of by his seniors, and the approval of equals is harder to earn than that of one's seniors. He had, in December 1915, torpedoed and sunk an enemy net-layer off the Western Ems. E-boats having been seen by the enemy off this river, they sent out a 3000-ton auxiliary to lay anti-submarine nets on the billet. The ship was escorted by four trawlers, a torpedo-boat, a small sloop, and several tugs and other small craft, but apart from the fact that there is Scriptural instruction against laying snares in sight of the bird, the enemy should have realised that an escort screen is no protection against a determined attack. "E 16" approached the screen, the units of which were zigzagging round the ship; she had to cut things fine, as the units were numerous, and the intervals between them small. Her periscope crossed the stern of an armed trawler at a range of fifty yards, and looking in the eyepiece Duff-Dunbar saw a sailor at the trawler's stern point at him, stabbing his finger at the six inches of thin tube that passed, and opening his mouth widely in what was guessed to be a volume of Teutonic sound. Two torpedoes were fired, while the escort charged and shouted and blew syrens, but the target had a section of net over the stern on its way out, and she was practically stopped and helpless; she sank in twelve minutes amidst a scene of great excitement. Three torpedo-boats and four trawlers hunted and swept for "E 16" for four hours, but she watched the proceedings from some distance off through her periscope, and in view of the high speed and constant alterations of course used by the torpedo-boats, refrained from joining in with further torpedo practice.

Submarine "E 38," just mentioned, met the High Sea Fleet on the 19th October 1916.

"Friday 13th: Left Harwich in execution of previous orders.

"14th: Started diving patrol.

"15th: Violent south-westerly gale, and a very heavy sea.

"16th: Strong W.N.W. gale. High confused sea.

"17th: Light N.W. wind. Moderate swell.

"18th: Fine weather.

"19th: 6.22 A.M. sighted funnels and masts of heavy ships to the E.N.E. . . ."

I have put that extract in to show, firstly, how dull a patrol normally is, and, secondly, how the boats have to wait on their

billets at all times and in all weather, while the enemy comes to sea at his convenience when it is nice and calm. "E 38" dived at full speed to attack, but could not get within range of the leading squadron, which was composed of battle-cruisers and destroyers, and which was zigzagging at high speed. Then came two light cruisers, at one of which Lieut.-Commander Jessop fired but missed at 600 yards. On raising his periscope again he "observed destroyers zigzagging at high speed in all directions." Then came the Battle Fleet, which passed out of range, and then a light cruiser—the *München*—with the usual screen of destroyers zigzagging each side of her. Allowing her a speed of 22 knots, "E 38" torpedoed her abreast the foremost funnel, filling the whole of the forward boiler-room with water and damaging her severely. The weather being calm and the bulkheads sound, the ship was safely got into harbour by the Germans.

Two boats were lost on the Dutch coast in 1916 and the crews interned. The first was "E 17," on the 6th January. She was carried in by an exceptional set of water into the Texel when steering for Terschelling. She pounded and hammered on the banks in a breaking sea till she was strained, leaking and damaged; then she got off and started back on the surface to Harwich. An unfortunate incident then betrayed her. She met a Dutch cruiser, which approached in such a way that her colours were not visible, and (being at practice gun stations) with her guns swinging in "E 17's" direction. Lieut.-Commander Monorieffe very naturally took her for an enemy and dived. As soon as the boat was under, the pounding she had received on the shoal showed its full effect. She began to fill, and the water reaching her battery and chlorine fumes being emitted, she had to be hastily brought to the surface. Still under the impression that the cruiser was German, Lieut.-Commander Monorieffe sank his boat. It was the actual fact that the boat was forced to dive that made her past salving: if she had been able to continue her voyage to England on the surface she would probably—given good weather and hard pumping—have arrived home.

The second boat, "H 6," ran ashore in misty weather on Schiermonnikoog—well in the Bight. She went hard on to the shoals and lay with a big list two and a half miles from the lighthouse. She sent a wireless signal to Captain Waistell, commanding the Flotilla, who was at sea superintending the operations of his boats in the T.B.D. *Firedrake*. Captain Waistell hurried to the spot, but realised that in such a position (close to enemy harbours) it would be impossible to carry out salvage operations. He decided, however, to send a motor-boat in with orders to "H 6" to send off the confidential books and the more highly trained rat-

ings of the crew—her captain with the remaining hands staying to see to her salvage and internment. This was done, though the operation took over two hours — an anxious time for all concerned. The boat was salved by the Dutch, and subsequently disposed of by us to their Government.

The enemy, of course, lost several boats by grounding and subsequent surrender on our coasts. The Goodwins, the Shipwash, and the French shoals were the end of some boats, and others were certainly damaged and weakened by contact with outlying parts of these islands. The case of "U-C 5" will be remembered, as she was salved and taken up the Thames to be shown to the public. She was herded on to the Shipwash shoal off Harwich by destroyers, and she then surrendered to H.M.S. *Firedrake* after touching off demolition charges against her mining-room bulkhead. The mines did not go off, and the boat remained more or less undamaged by the explosions. Lieutenant Patterson, torpedo-lieutenant of the VIIIth Submarine Flotilla, then dived into her as she lay half-submerged and removed the detonator plugs of her mines. For this act he was later decorated. U-C boats were always laying mines off Harwich, with occasional success; they certainly managed to destroy in this way two of our boats as they left harbour. Our minelaying submarines used to return the compliment at Zeebrugge. Perhaps the most exciting mine laid by us was the one which was accidentally let go in the middle of the submarine exercising area off Harwich harbour. The boat that had slipped it reported the fact broadcast, and everybody out near the area, knowing that the unpleasant piece of cargo had functioned correctly, and with no discrimination between friend or foe, was waiting at its correct depth below the surface for something to hit it, cleared off hurriedly. The sweepers were sent for and the obstruction removed, after which the exercises proceeded as before. The Germans had some similar incidents which turned out more unpleasantly—at least, from their point of view. On one occasion a half-flotilla of boats were lying alongside their parent ship in Wilhelmshaven. A sailor accidentally let a mine go from the outside boat; the mine was due to become "alive" after a quarter of an hour, and was, owing to the shoal water, already rubbing the keels of the boats. An instant report by the sailor of what he had done, and a general movement of the boats away, would have saved the situation; but the sailor did not rise to the occasion. His home was in far-distant Hanover, and he started for it and demobilisation as fast as he could run. Punctually to time the mine exploded violently, and the half-flotilla was suddenly reduced in numbers.

The enemy also suffered from a very touchy pistol which they introduced for the war-heads of their torpedoes. It was a very good pistol for service, as it went off unfailingly on contact with our ships, but it had the disadvantage of doing the same thing aboard German submarines if they pitched heavily in a seaway, which made it rather unpopular and led to its modification. This type of torpedo pistol is thought by the Germans to have caused the loss of the light cruiser *Karlsruhe*, which unaccountably blew up off the coast of South America in 1915. A U-boat was certainly lost in Kiel from this cause, a torpedo having slid forward in the tube until it touched the outer door, when it at once exploded. That sort of case explains why, in night encounters at short range between British and German submarines, our enemies never tried to use the ram; with the same kind of hair-trigger explosives in our tubes we would have been equally cautious.

I want to tell some stories about submarine sailors here, but there are such hundreds of incidents to record that it is impossible to tell many. In despatches of submarine captains describing successes against the enemy, one sees almost every time: "The whole crew having carried out their duties calmly and admirably, it is impossible for me to recommend any particular men for decoration . . ." But I remember an incident near the Horns Reef Light Vessel, when a boat approached a suspicious trawler and dived past her to investigate—finding that the suspected gun in the bows was in reality a spar on the capstan, the boat "dipped" to seventy feet to turn away; but owing to the trawler altering course as she did so, dived right into the trawl net and hung up in it. It seeming extremely probable that the net was a real submarine-catching device, and that the trawler was hostile, it was decided to wait a while before rising, in order that ammunition, &c., might be prepared at the conning-tower foot, and general frightfulness arranged for the expected fight on the surface. Meanwhile, with her motors stopped, the boat was towed along in the net, taking extraordinary angles every way, and generally acting like a trapped salmon. When ready, the tanks were blown, and the boat rose with a rush, breaking surface in a festoon of net and wires close under the trawler's stern. The gun's crew jumped to their stations, riflemen lay down on the bridge deck, and a petty officer with an axe started to chop away the wires that were holding the boat. It was desirable, owing to the presence of a distant Zeppelin, to get clear and dive again as soon as possible, whether an altercation was necessary with the trawler or not, and so the petty officer was instructed to get a move on. As a matter

of fact, the trawler was Dutch, and hoisted her colours to prove it, so that no shooting was necessary; but the chief feature of the incident was that from his arrival on deck with the axe, to the "plop" of the last wire being cut through five minutes later (when he straightened up, and luridly asked when the shooting was going to begin), the petty officer never looked round or faced to see what kind of enemy he had to engage. He chopped with his back turned, showing a fine lack of curiosity and a strict attention to business. The submarine sailor is really an imperturbable person. A boat was engaged in attacking a U-boat which had come to the surface half a mile away to charge her batteries, unaware of the presence of the E-boat diving past on patrol. The sighting of the enemy, and the call to "action stations," came as the sailor servant was laying the officers' breakfast; the attack, owing to the circles and evolutions of the target, took an hour. As the E-boat turned in on her firing course, her captain lowered the periscope, and steadying his voice to hide his excitement, passed the word: "We'll fire in three minutes — stand by bow tubes"; and at once a voice spoke by his side — a voice confident in the fact that a definite time-interval had at last been mentioned— "Your coffee, sir. Will you have it now? It's getting cold." It is regretted that the captain's placidity was so far short of his subordinate's that he abruptly refused the offer. The same sailor on one occasion, when acting as officers' cook, quite surpassed himself at dinner by producing a very excellent but mysterious savoury when the boat was a week out on patrol. His tact was not equal to his cooking, however, for on being questioned as to the savoury's ingredients, he explained that "four o' the eggs and the last bit o' cheese went west yesterday, and I didn't like to waste 'em." But then curry-powder will camouflage anything if you use enough.

The submarine sailor is a picked man, and a high standard is expected of him. The officers do their best to show him what the standard should be, but he is able to produce examples on his own for the instruction of his messmates. When in July 1918 "C 25" was attacked by five German seaplanes off Harwich, and the captain and all hands on deck were shot down by machine-gun fire, the first-lieutenant started up the conning-tower to investigate, and as he came up, Leading-Seaman Barge, the only one alive of four on the bridge, called down to him, "Dive; don't worry about me, I'm done for."

The boat did not dive; she got back to harbour on the surface, but Leading-Seaman Barge was dead five minutes after his last speech—a speech which, thinking it over, appears to be not a bad epitaph.

In 1915 a man well known to the Submarine Service—a

Submarine Flotilla Chaplain—went out in "E 4," under Commander Leir, to see for himself how his messmates spent their time on patrol. It is usual in patrol submarines to have as few hands on deck as possible—in fact, nobody is allowed on deck beyond the officer on watch, a look-out, and perhaps one other. On this occasion "E 4," having the chaplain on board, decided to call her crew to prayers on deck while they were on passage to their area, but the crowded state of the bridge a few minutes later was rather a handicap to quick diving when a Zeppelin interrupted the service. The padre, however, had no intention of being a mere passenger, and during the trip he, after a little training, was able to stand his trick on a hydroplane wheel when diving. A survivor from an armed trawler torpedoed by "E 4" was also a grateful guest, and the curious sight might occasionally have been seen of a German prisoner and a naval chaplain sitting on adjacent stools and working the diving-wheels in harmony. What the padre really thought of the trip is not known, but there was no doubt about his having the attention and respect of his somewhat reckless flock on his return to harbour. "E 4" was the sort of boat to take a passage in if one wished to see life in the Bight thoroughly. On one occasion she rose to the surface and chased a U-boat up to Heligoland, endeavouring to instil into her opponent a spirit of pugnacity by continual signals on the arc-lamp, such as, "How many women and children have you killed to-day?" and in a sort of meet-you-half-way tone, "Gott strafe England!" The U-boat, however, was not playing, and used her superior speed to get away (which was perhaps as well, because, if she'd only known it, "E 4" at the time had no gun).

This was early in the war, when things had not settled down and the minefields in the Bight were few. More than one boat then had dived right up to the entrance of Schillig Roads and had looked longingly at the guardship lying just out of range across the shoals. E-boats treated destroyers with contempt, and used to remain on the surface in their presence to the last possible moment. There are many rumours of strange incidents of 1914 and 1915 which did not reach despatches, such as wireless signals to Heligoland suggesting that the enemy ships should come out and give our boats a chance, or of boats firing a succession of different coloured lights off the mouth of the Ems in the hope of enticing something out to see what it was all about. If the wireless story is not true it is at any rate a sound idea. We did not develop any propaganda department till much later, or they might have developed it, for such signals would have been very suggestive when intercepted by neutral wireless stations. The state of defence of the Bight changed from 1914, when our boats

played about in it as they pleased, and even cruisers could come in and actually sight Heligoland, to the 1915 stage, when boats had to work inside, diving all day in the midst of enemy patrol vessels and getting their batteries charged in the intervals between alarms at night. Then the minefields began to thicken, and the submarine patrol line was brought gradually back to the longitude of Borkum. Then our minefields began to cluster around those the enemy had laid, and the patrols eventually took up a curved line from Terschelling across the mouth of the Bight to Hiorn's Reef and the Vyl Light, and remained there, except for occasional examination trips up to the enemy harbours and for the frequent visits of our mine-laying submarines (which used to drop their cargoes wherever they were most likely to have full effect). This moving back of the patrol line was not due to the increase of the Bight minefields alone: the realisation of the use of the submarine as a scout and the recognition of the fact that for our fleet the wireless in the submarines was of more strategic use than were the torpedoes, altered the policy by which the boats were stationed. A tactical victory may be useful, but it is a strategical victory that wins a war, and this fact was at the base of our policy at sea. The enemy seems never to have understood what sea-strategy meant, although his tactics were sound enough. It is a curious thing to note how the *rôle* of the submarine changed during the war. The boats of both sides started by being ordinary anti-warship craft, taking a chance when they could. Gradually our boats became outer-line scouts (with exceptions), and the U-boats (with exceptions) became exclusively commerce-destroyers. At present anti-submarine work has advanced so far that it would be a rash nation which would endeavour to obtain a victory over another by a submarine force alone. The big cruiser-submarine is a danger, but it can be met and defeated by a better (though not necessarily bigger) submarine, while the anti-submarine work by surface ships will always be the prerogative of the nation with the big fleet in support. The submarine, as we know it now, can never win a war without a battle fleet behind it: the two types of weapon work together, and the one cannot supplant the other. A curious remark has been made by a German officer to an English one. "If we had beaten your Fleet, you could have still kept up the blockade with your submarines, because England geographically blockades Germany, and so we would have been no better off." Geographically he was right—strategically he was, in the author's opinion, very much wrong.

The "crash dives," so frequently performed by boats when in danger, were sometimes exciting. If the trim was too heavy at the time, the boat might take an

angle and go right on down to the bottom: this has been done sufficiently violently at times to crack some of the battery cells, and also to start the torpedoes running in the tubes with resultant damage to the torpedoes and a discharge of exhaust gas into the boat. It is always advisable for the officer on deck to get down as soon as possible after he has rung the diving alarm-horn—otherwise he may get left behind, as the crew below don't wait for him. The lower door of the conning-tower is dropped by an officer below if water comes down, isolating the officer in the conning-tower, who is probably struggling to get the upper lid closed. One boat had a little difficulty once through a corner of the bridge-screen catching under the hinges of the upper lid; the boat was going under —the captain was furiously trying to jam the lid down—and the water was pouring into the boat. The captain called down to close the lower door and that he would "swim for it," but before this was done the obstruction cleared, the hatch closed, and he fell down into the boat. The depth being then thirty feet, it can be imagined that a good deal of water had come in and things had been exciting, to say the least of it; it was noticed, however, that the seamen's cook had never throughout the incident looked up once from his careful watch on the cooking of the sailors' sausages. Another incident occurred near Heligoland, when one officer of an E-boat came on deck to relieve another during the nightly three hours' charge. As he came up he saw a faint light astern and called attention to it. The officer already on deck (hereinafter known as No. One) had just passed the word down to let some more water into the tanks "till I tell you to stop," in order to lower the boat a little and leave only her conning-tower visible. His attention being distracted to the light astern (which was on the south end of Heligoland), he began to study it with his glasses, and had dropped the memory of flooding tanks from his mind—until a shout from officer Number Two made him turn. The water was up to the tip of the conning-tower lid. The look-out and Number Two had leaped below, and the third officer, inside the boat, had his hand on the lever of the lower door and his eyes on a depth gauge, which already showed ten feet. Number One got down inside in remarkably quick time (at the cost of some abrasions) and pulled the upper lid down after him as the North Sea came over the top. Packed in the conning-tower with him were the look-out and Number Two—both of them helpless with laughter. The third officer then blew tanks, and as the boat reached the surface again, opened the lower door and inquired "if there was anybody to go back for?" Fortunately there was not.

A patrol boat's crew being trained to dive quickly and to ask questions afterwards, a

boat on passage with low buoyancy is rather a touchy platform to stand on. The diving alarm button is fitted just inside the conning-tower lid, and one stoops down to ring it. One officer thought that a "wandering" lead extension with a bell-push button on it would be a convenient fitting, as he could then stand on watch on the bridge and ring the alarm with his hand in his lammy-coat pocket. It worked all right till a sea came over his head and put two inches of salt water in the pocket; the bell push was not water-tight, and, well, he only just got in and joined his crew before they were right under. An E-boat was once running past the Maas Lightship off the Dutch coast. She was trimmed a bit more than half down, and was travelling at fourteen knots, with a little "rise" helm on the hydroplanes. The captain and look-out were on the bridge—it was flat calm and fairly clear weather. Down below an enthusiastic stoker chose the moment as suitable for oiling-over the shafting of the after hydroplanes; he started by releasing the locking gear, and running the planes "hard up." The boat instantly tried to loop the loop. Her bow rose till she was at an extraordinary angle—the engines slowed up and hammered violently—the look-out vanished below, the captain jumped down the ladder, rang the telegraphs to "slow," and (having realised what had happened), remained with his head and shoulders out, looking at the foaming wave of water that had risen to halfway along the bridge. He knew that as soon as the boat slowed she would regain her normal angle, and he intended then to show that he, at any rate, was abreast of the situation, and to descend with dignity when the headway was lost, and to sarcastically liken his crew to a collection of Armenian schoolgirls. The crew, however, unwittingly defeated him. The motto of a patrol boat is, "When in doubt—dive," and they were well-trained men. They did not know what had happened beyond that the boat had done something funny and that there was a lot of violent language going on inside her. The captain watched the stern wave—instead of receding as the angle lessened—break right over his head, and he had to shut down quickly and come below, being met by the complacent report of "Thirty feet, sir, going down." The passing Dutch trawlers had a good view of the incident, and must have thought the boat had gone mad.

There were always so many fishing trawlers about on the Dutch coast that it was impossible for our boats to avoid being seen and noted when on passage on the surface. If possible, one gave them a wide berth in case of accidents, but none of them were ever found to be Germans in disguise. The British patrol boats were more unpleasant: an H-boat nearly met her end from one

off the Irish coast once at night. The submarine was an anti-submarine patrol, and was charging on the surface, when the trawler approached and endeavoured to ram. The attempt was dodged by a matter of feet, and apparently the trawler's men were too excited to recognise the volley of verbal vitriol (that was addressed to them as they shot past) as being English, for as the H-boat dropped across their stern they opened rapid fire on her with the after gun. The submarine men could look into the gun-muzzle at a few yards' range, but in spite of their being nearly deafened by a very rapid and continuous fire, there was no damage done except for a graze on the after superstructure. The submarine then used her superior speed and vanished.

Our mine-laying submarines were few in number, for the reason that we had not the need for such boats that the enemy had. We could have built more if we had wished to, but owing to the short length of enemy coast-line we found that a few boats running regularly could cover the work. The mines were laid down anywhere in the Bight where results might be expected from them, and off Zeebrugge and places on the Belgian coast where enemy ships passed. There was far more secrecy over the work of mine-laying boats than the patrol boats, for the enemy knew quite well that we had a patrol ring round the Bight, and he probably knew roughly the number and positions of the boats we had out at any time. But the mine-layers used to get short notice of their leaving: they hoisted their mines aboard, got their orders, and vanished to the north-eastward before any one else in the depot had had time to wonder where they were going. A patrol boat used to have an area about ten miles by ten to work in; a mine-layer had to put the cargo absolutely on the spot ordered,—an error in navigation might mean not only that the enemy would not hit the mines, but that an E-boat might run into them later under the impression that she was skirting the field. It was customary, therefore, for the run from Harwich to be made to some light-vessel or a fixed point on the Dutch coast before entering the Bight, and for the greatest care to be taken by star observations, &c., on the run-in to check the reckoning. After the Armistice the evidence of the enemy showed that the navigation and placing of mines had been extraordinarily accurate. Two of the boats were lost on this duty, both in the Bight, and both probably through striking mines—"E 24" and "E 34."

In July 1917 "E 41" (Lieut.-Commander Holbrook, V.C.) having just laid her mines in a swept channel in the Bight, sighted a German merchant ship approaching, guarded by an escort of patrol craft. "E 41" torpedoed the ship, and was promptly chased by the escort. She led the chase to-

wards the spot where she had just put her mines down, and went deep herself as she crossed the dangerous area. The patrol craft, however, broke off the pursuit before they reached the spot, and turned home. A little more ardour on their part and "E 41" could have watched her own mines at work.

One mine-layer had the good fortune to pick up the laden boats of a neutral steamer which had been sunk by the enemy. She towed them into safety (her captain nobly refusing a present of a box of cigars offered him by the survivors). On his return to Harwich the officers of his flotilla rose to the occasion and presented him with a large pair of binoculars, complete in a lacquered case. The binoculars (suitably inscribed) were formed of two beer bottles joined together, and the case was neatly made of biscuit-box tin. Suitable speeches being made and the glasses handed over, the recipient was requested to sign a "receipt note" for them. Wondering at such meticulous red-tape, he complied, and the carbon paper being removed and the underlying "chit" sent to the wardroom steward, he discovered that his signature was the authority for drinks all round to the deputation, which, after all, was the main object for which the ceremony had been inaugurated.

MUSINGS WITHOUT METHOD.

A BLIND ALLEY—EDUCATION IN THE ARMY—A UNIVERSITY WITH 3,000,000 STUDENTS—THE DANGERS OF THE NEW SCHEME—SMATTERING AND GOVERNMENT INTERFERENCE—THE SENATE OF THE UNITED STATES—A VISION OF THE LEAGUE OF NATIONS—THE "PLAIN" MEN—MR CHURCHILL'S APOLOGY—THE THEFTS OF GERMANY.

THE Army is perforce a blind alley, which leads nowhither. When peace is signed, or when the time of short service is finished, the soldier returns to civil life, too often ill-equipped for the new work which confronts him. If he be ill-equipped it is by no fault of his own. The lessons of discipline and resource which he has learned have developed his character and made him a better citizen; they have not always increased his power of earning money. In the free life of service and adventure he may have forgotten the poor useless lessons of the elementary school, and the knowledge which may be turned to profitable account has not kept pace with his knowledge of the world. So much is obvious to us all as we look back upon the past years. The obvious truth was gradually accepted by the soldiers themselves. As the war progressed and time hung heavy on their hands when they were in billets, they felt the need of some sort of training for their minds. Perfect in bodily health and happy in hours and days of leisure, they demanded to be taught. Their journeys across the sea, as they enlarged their horizon, had also widened their brains. A curiosity not only into the meaning of the present but into the history of the past was awakened within them. Conscious that they stood upon hallowed ground, they wanted to know about those who stood and fought thereon before them. The field of Agincourt was enough to inspire them with a sense of history and of patriotism, to make them feel that they themselves were links in a long unbroken chain. How could they fight at Gallipoli or in Palestine or at Salonika without attempting to discover what had happened there in ages past? And then the request for education was made, a request which has been wisely and generously answered.

Where the movement first began we are not told. It owes its vitality and importance to the fact that it was at once spontaneous and universal. The desire came from the soldiers themselves: it was not put into their heads by zealous superiors, nor expressed in the mere hope of a favourable reception. The men who

asked the opportunity of learning were both sincere and disinterested. And best of all, even though they were not unmindful of the future, it was for its own sake that they hankered after knowledge. "An officer told me the other day," wrote Lord Gorell, the Deputy Director of Army Education, "that he had been down to investigate questions of grievance in a certain unit, and after addressing the men generally, he stated that he would willingly hear any individual grievance, provided it was not a purely personal 'grouse'; and he said that the one main grievance that was brought to him was that in the unit, by reason of the difficulties of its organisation, there had been no educational lectures. In his opinion there was an absolute hunger for knowledge which was very significant. Nor does this instance stand alone. A private wrote home a little while back a letter, in which he said that since the institution of these lectures his whole life had been changed. He was billeted six miles from Lille, and had various military duties to perform; but after these were over he walked in every day to Lille to attend a class—six miles in and six miles out." A soldier does not walk twelve miles to hear a lecture for any motive of insincerity, and there is no doubt that our soldiers intend, if they can, to satisfy an admirable curiosity. There is no doubt, also, that they have acted independently of their officers and of the Education Department.

The movement began, as we have said, spontaneously. The first classes were held unofficially more than two years ago, and increased so speedily in popularity that a scheme of education was submitted to the War Office, and approved by Lord Milner in September 1918. Upon the mass of the Army the instruction given is not forced. The choice of subjects is free, and attendance at lecture or class is voluntary. Only in young soldier and graduated battalions is there any compulsion. Yet there was no hanging back on the soldiers' part, and the numbers cited by Lord Gorell, to whom the scheme owes a profound debt, are astonishing. In January last, when the Armistice had brought leisure, and when demobilisation had not yet decimated the Army, some three millions of soldiers were studying such subjects as seemed good to them. "According to the latest returns," we are told, "there are between 400,000 and 500,000 undergoing instruction in classes in France alone, and in addition to all those who have been lectured in their units it is estimated that at least a million have attended the lectures organised by Divisions. In the single month of January we sent out 195,000 books to France, and they were not enough." These numbers have an eloquence of their own, which need not be embellished.

And what is happening in France is happening also on the Rhine, whereat by a pleasant irony the University of Bonn has been annexed by our soldiers, and several schools at Cologne have been adapted to our new needs.

Among all the accidents of war, this accident of education seems to us to hold out the highest promise for the future. Benefits undesigned are always of the greatest value, and we cannot overrate the importance of a scheme which owes nothing to the baleful initiation of the State. The War Office has accepted the suggestions made to it with understanding and in good faith. It sees clearly that a well-educated soldier will be of better worth than a soldier who has not been taught to think and to read for himself. A pamphlet, issued with Army Order VII., dated May 13th, 1919, not only recognises the advantage of the new training, but is packed with hints which the lecturers will do well to take to heart. Above all, it insists that education shall not be regarded as a form of recreation for spare hours, that it is, in effect, "an essential element in the making of a soldier and an Army." In the first place, "the variety and the real difficulty of the battle training of the modern soldier render it necessary that he should be quick, intelligent, and of a ready understanding. It is a waste both of time and energy to have to impart military and battle training to men whose minds have, in the great majority of cases, lain almost idle since the elementary school years." That is true enough. It is true also, in the second place, that education has a good moral effect upon the soldiers, and since "success in war depends more on moral than on physical qualities," the new training of soldiers is amply justified. Nor must it be forgotten that education "provides a link with civil life and with the nation at large which, both from the point of view of the individual man and of the Army generally, is of vital importance." What more need be said of a scheme which has the added advantage of being all the soldiers' own?

We have never been in favour of general and compulsory education. To educate a man against his will is as foolish as it would be to make a man a cobbler against his will. There is no peculiar virtue in knowledge, which is useless if it be not willingly acquired. We believe that no worse calamity can ever overtake a nation than an educated proletariat, which would never be clever enough to turn its brains to good purposes, and would think itself too well instructed to soil its hands with toil. But there is in the Army's clamour for knowledge a sense of aristocracy and independence which should fill Englishmen with a proper pride. That such an adventure into the realm of learning should be made in the midst of a great war proves the vitality of our race. Surely the optimist

who said that the movement towards education will stand out in history as the strangest episode in the war, spoke with some measure of truth. Not only does there exist in France and Germany a kind of university, attended by half a million students, but the way is shown to the future transforming of the Army. What has been may be; and even when the gust of enthusiasm be passed, the soldiers will not slip back into the old ways. The young recruits will flock to the colours with a better heart if they know that, while they are trained in the defence of country, it will not be beyond their reach to acquire such knowledge as befits their temper and their ambition.

We can only hope that the golden opportunity will not be lost, either by an easy love of smattering or by Government interference. We understand well enough the difficulties which beset the lecturer who aspires to hold the attention of an untrained audience. We have seen the lamentable effect of the system, erroneously called University extension, which set out to bring a University education into the provinces, and which achieved little else than a series of what used to be called penny-readings. Now the Army asks, and should get, something far better than penny-readings, and yet there is a danger that the lecturers chosen to teach our soldiers will begin with training and end with diversion. The list of lectures does not fill us with confidence, and the papers which have been set to test the knowledge of the students are composed too closely upon the model of scholastic examination to be worthy their lofty occasion. However, they are but a beginning, and if only the standard be kept high enough, if only the students are encouraged to think as well as to listen, the soldiers will escape the vice of smattering, and will discover that what they find out for themselves is worth ten times that which is told them by others.

A still greater danger than the danger of half-knowledge is the danger of interference by Government. If once the department of education gets its hands about the training of soldiers, then there will be an end of it. The department of education is and has always been far more deeply interested in politics and fanaticism than in learning. It does not care so much for what is just and useful as for what will please its masters, the mass of the electors, who are not educated, who do not wish to be educated, and who would be incapable of education even if they wanted it. We do not remember a single step taken by the department that was not framed to catch somebody's vote. And nobody's vote should interfere with the soldiers' spontaneous zeal for instruction. We are told daily that Mr Fisher is an inspired minister, the wisest statesman who ever condescended to Whitehall, and we remember

no single act or word of his which was not prompted by politics. At the present moment he is busy thrusting grants of money upon our old Universities, grants which he will give only in exchange for governmental control and governmental inquisition. He knows well enough that freedom and autonomy are the two needs of Oxford and Cambridge. He knows likewise that the "proletariat" looks with a jealous eye upon these independent Universities, and would like to treat the masters and tutors of their colleges as Mr Smillie hoped, and hoped vainly, that he might treat those whom he calls "the Dukes." So he comes with his gifts in his hands, and if the gifts are accepted there will be an end not only of the great tradition, but of the great usefulness of our Universities, which will be transformed, according to the prophecy of the late J. E. B. Mayor, into infant schools. As the department of education intends to destroy the Universities and public schools, to reduce all learning down to the drab level of popular incompetence, that the voter may be purged for a moment of his envy, so it will destroy the system of instruction devised for our soldiers if that system jar on the nerves of one single noisy "proletarian." Let the Army, then, beware of Whitehall's counsel and Whitehall's always interested munificence.

And there is another argument against the interference of Ministers in matters of instruction which cannot be too often reiterated. Education, controlled by the State, means political perversion. We have all seen what the public education of Germany achieved for that ruined country. The teachers, employed by the State, taught what they were employed to teach. They upheld the policy of the Kaiser and his backers, because they were paid to uphold it. Had they told what they believed to be truth about the past, they would have been promptly discharged from their posts. Four years ago we were all loud in our condemnation of the teaching of Treitschke and his colleagues. We saw then, clearly enough, that the public opinion of Germany had been carefully prepared in schools and colleges, and we deplored, with perfect justice, that truth should be thus wantonly sacrificed to politics. To-day, in our blind rage for official control of everything, we desire nothing so much as to be taught by the enemy. Our Universities must be supported and controlled by the State; our professors must be fed by the State; what is scholarship and what is not shall be decided, not by scholars, but by demagogues, with their eyes fixed upon the ballot-box. It means so much more patronage for the Government; it means so much more chance of flattering and bedevilling the constituents. But

what becomes of learning in this welter of politics and falsehood? Says the voter: Greek is a heathen tongue. The demagogue replies: Away with it. And since it is to the University's advantage to obey the demagogues, Greek is abolished. What shall be put in its place depends upon the humour of Whitehall, which will presently declare itself the sole repository of wisdom and understanding. And thus learning will perish and be replaced by an article of commerce controlled by the State, which will have as close a relation to learning itself, which can flourish only in an atmosphere of freedom, as Government beer has to English ale, or as the productions of the Meat Trust have to English beef and mutton. Therefore, let the soldiers be obdurate. They have demanded instruction, and they are getting it. But they will be disappointed of all their hopes if they allow the Education Office to interfere with their project. The War Office is at once more human and more humane than that which is presided over by Mr Fisher, and the soldiers will do well to trust to their officers for help and guidance, to resent either the aid or the inspection of those who would turn their sincere and simple-minded aspiration into an election cry.

We are grateful indeed to the Senate of the United States for giving us a dress rehearsal (so to say) of the League of Nations. With one dissentient that precious body requested the American Peace Delegation to obtain for the Irish agents a hearing before the Peace Conference. The one wise man in America who dissented deserves to be commemorated. Mr Williams, of Mississippi, is his name, and he based his dissent upon the very proper ground that "it was none of our business." Senator Lodge, whose zeal for England, never deep nor sincere, speedily evaporated, has not long disappointed us. He has returned to the traditional hatred of Great Britain, which has been his solace and his happiness for half a century. We are glad of it. So long as Senator Lodge appeared to be on our side, we feared that there must be something wrong with us. At last the incubus of his approval is removed, and we breathe more freely. When he accepted Mr Walsh's amendment that "the Senate of the United States expresses its sympathy with the aspirations of the Irish people for a Government of its own choice," we knew that the war was over and that the amenities of peace, as America understands them, were at last restored to us.

But the Senate, in intervening in what does not concern it in the slightest, shows us only what one may expect in the near future, when half a dozen expensive and useless palaces are built at Geneva. Every day will bring its intervention, and though the malice and eloquence of the Leaguers will not

often be translated into action, we shall henceforth be assured a policy of pin-pricks and ill-humour. Meanwhile, Senator Lodge permits his anger to cloud his judgment and to confuse his thought. If he talks loud enough and long enough, the Senate of the United States may dominate the League of Nations: the two bodies may, for all we know or care, become identical. This day has not yet come, and Senator Lodge should remember the limitations of his support, and should know that nothing which Great Britain has done as an individual State justifies his interference.

The United States have always been lacking in humour, or they would recognise their ridiculous position and keep silence. Suppose we in England, having money to throw into the sea, were to collect vast sums wherewith we paid for a vast agitation to "free" Texas, or Virginia, or South Carolina. Would not the Americans be very angry, and tell us roundly to mind our own business? We hope that they would. If they did not actively protest, we should justly feel humiliated. But Texas, and Virginia, and South Carolina are nothing to us. We care not whether they have governments of their own choice or not. They may be monarchist, or democratic, or Bolshevist, as they choose. We are not interested in the architecture of their parish-pumps, and we should regard ourselves as grossly impertinent if we dared to suggest improvements in their time-honoured designs. And to do the United States full justice, we believe that they also would denounce our interference, were it a possibility, in set terms.

The Americans, then, lacking humour, commit the sin which they would most loudly and rightly condemn in others. Nor are they conscious of their gross absurdity. The pillory in which they have set themselves is humiliating and ridiculous. For the truth is, that their impertinence annoys nobody in Great Britain. The Senate may pass as many silly resolutions as it chooses, and nobody in this kingdom is one whit the worse for them; and nobody is angry, and the absence of anger must exasperate the solemn Senators far more than would reams of execration. "It is only the United States," we say, as we might say, "It is only Timbuctoo," and what they do or resolve is wholly irrelevant. Besides, there is a Presidential Election next year, and all the demagogues are busily engaged in their favourite sport of twisting the lion's tail. Let them twist it, if it gives them any satisfaction or brings them any votes. The Lion is indifferent, and will never show his fangs to the United States. Poor United States! They have taken their courage in both hands, and prepared most valiantly to hurt the pride of Great Britain. And though Great Britain would reply in-

dignantly were the insult offered by a serious nation, it laughs with scorn at Senator Lodge and his friends. But even in laughing it cannot withhold its gratitude. For the Senate, as we have said, has given us a glimpse of a League of Nations at work, and it has proved to us that the United States cannot separate their domestic from their foreign policy, — that, when the amateurs of Geneva are properly established, the Americans, at any rate, will use their debates for the only enterprise dear to demagogues, the enterprise of catching votes.

It is this same enterprise which has engrossed Mr Lloyd George during the many months which he has spent in Paris. He does not understand the duty of a plenipotentiary who represents a Great Power at an international conference. His thoughts are all with the Independent Labour Party or with the Union of Democratic Control, or with any well-organised mob of men who love all countries better than their own. As a mark of the confidence which the House of Commons reposes in him, he was forced to disclaim, openly, that he had met or conferred with Messrs Ramsay Macdonald and Arthur Henderson. This confession marks at once Mr Lloyd George's trust in himself and the country's trust in Mr Lloyd George. We cannot believe that he is not plotting for votes, unless we are given a plain decisive statement. And even then we wonder why the statement should have been made at all, unless there had been some ground of suspicion. Where there is smoke there is fire, and Mr Lloyd George's tenderness for the extreme wing of the Labour Party is notorious. At any rate, it is not surprising that Mr Lloyd George should be thought to look upon the Germans with a sympathetic eye. It is said that he wishes to make the terms easier for them, and thus to placate their English friends. If this be true, then Mr Lloyd George's levity is more gravely reprehensible than his ignorance. We know his playful habit only too well of boasting that he does not know where this or that place is on the map. One day it was the district of the Saar which escaped him. Another day he confessed, to the laughter and applause of his friends, that he had only just heard of Teschen. The answer to such pleasantries is that, if he were ignorant of Europe, it was quite easy for him to stay at home and let somebody else, properly equipped with knowledge and judgment, represent England in Paris. But no: this Peace, as we all heard a thousand times, was to be a people's Peace, made openly by "plain men," and it is not surprising that fighting is going on all over Europe.

The Peace of Europe, then, is endangered, that the friends of Germany in the Labour Party should not be displeased. For the same reason the safety

and happiness of Russia are being sacrificed by our Ministers. Mr Ramsay Macdonald loves a Soviet as a schoolboy loves jam, and though Mr Ramsay Macdonald is neither a working man nor a member of Parliament, he must, for some mysterious cause, be soothed at all hazards. If ever the duty of a nation chimed with its advantage, England's duty and advantage chime in Russia at this moment. If the Bolsheviks be not utterly suppressed, not only will all the able and industrious Russians be starved or murdered, but the foul propaganda of Lenin will provoke disturbances for us all over the East. We have seen what cunning and fanaticism can achieve in Egypt, in Afghanistan, and in India. More than this, Captain Cromie's death is still unavenged, and the British officers, who were exchanged for the ineffable Raskolnikoff, bore evident traces of the brutalities and cruelties which they had suffered from the Russian Jews. Is it not our duty to punish those who have killed and imprisoned and tortured our compatriots? Is it not a patent advantage to us and to all Europe that security and prosperity should be brought back to Russia?

We should have thought so. But Messrs D. Maclean and R. Macdonald think otherwise; and it is noteworthy that Mr Churchill, in a speech delivered in the House of Commons, apologised, not because we were not doing enough in Russia, but because we were doing anything at all. He did his best to belittle our effort, and to make it clear to his Radical supporters that we were sedulously doing our best to evade all responsibility. "We are endeavouring to wind up our affairs in North Russia," said he. "In the Caucasus," declared our eminent and indispensable statesman, "our troops were not in contact with the enemy, but were merely occupying that country until the general scheme was decided, and it was expected that before long they would be recalled." This news will doubtless bring comfort to the breasts of all those who have a natural love of murder and arson. Still better: "We had no troops in Siberia except two battalions, who remained hundreds of miles away from the fighting." Where, indeed, should British battalions be, if not hundreds of miles away from the sound of the guns? Surely these facts should satisfy even the exacting morality of our new Sir Galahad, Mr R. Macdonald, who supports the Soviet Government, and would not for the world interfere with Trotsky and his Chinese mercenaries. But they do not satisfy loyal Englishmen, who think that it is our failure to have saved the *bourgeoisie* and the peasants of Russia from Jews, Letts, and Chinamen which needs an apology, not our half-hearted and furtive attempts at their salvation. The truth is that we should either show

some energy in Russia or keep out of it altogether. The policy of sending a handful of men at a time is expensive both in lives and money. Moreover, it is not likely to succeed. That we should do what we can to save Russia from the Red Terror should be obvious to all, and had Mr Churchill refrained from apology altogether we should have had a greater faith than we have in his ability to settle a difficult question. But Mr Churchill, like Mr Lloyd George, is afraid of the electorate, is afraid of the House of Commons, is afraid of any organised mob of citizens. And so long as fear dominates our politicians, we can hope for peace neither at home nor abroad. The same spirit, which asks the country's pardon for doing a hundredth part of its duty in Russia, in sheer fright pays an unemployment wage, subsidises the bakers that the proletariat may get cheap bread, and offers the working man for eight shillings a week a house which is worth twenty-one. So that it is a mere matter of time before we become dishonoured abroad and bankrupt at home, unless indeed at the eleventh hour statesmanship takes the place of panic fear.

The representatives of the four Great Powers, then, have delayed the making of peace, to their own undoing and the undoing of others. They are as little able to help themselves as to help those dependent upon them. Single-mindedness is as far beyond their reach as justice. They negotiated with Germany while their thoughts were far away. "Mr Wilson had to keep his eye on Congress and on the Senate," said the political correspondent of the 'Times' one day. "Mr Lloyd George had to remember his electioneering pledges and obtain recognition in some form or other for them in the Peace Treaty." Never was a heavier nor a juster indictment made against those who boasted that they were "plain men." So plain were they that they could not keep their eye on the Peace, they could not remember what the business was which brought them to Paris. And their tricks and tergiversations prove with a lucidity, fatal for their own pretensions, that the representatives of "great democracies" are unable to uphold the burden of diplomacy.

Our first duty was to see that Belgium came out of the war as strong and as prosperous as she went into it. The brave decision which she took to oppose the passage of German troops through her territory, the courage with which her small army withstood the assault of the German legions, entitled her not only to our respect, but to all the practical help we could give to her. If ever there was a debt of honour, it was the debt we owed and still owe to Belgium. Even the Germans recognised their obligation, in words at least, and promised on a scrap

of paper to repair the damage which they had done. That damage is not repaired, and is not likely to be repaired. The Great Powers, in their tender solicitude for Germany, have discovered that the guilty nation cannot afford, without great inconvenience, to pay for the breakages in which during her years of triumph she loudly exulted.

The peculiar savagery with which the Huns fell upon Belgium has left her towns and villages pulverised and bereft her of her wealth. Four and a half years of German occupation has completed the work begun by arson and destruction. The factories of Belgium, stripped with a cold deliberation of their machinery, will be useless for many a year to come. And what have the Allies done for Belgium? They have allotted to her, according to a well-informed correspondent in the 'Morning Post,' two milliards and a half of francs from the German indemnities. Of what use is that sum to Belgium? It does no more than pay back the sum which Germany exacted from Belgium during her occupation—a sum which should have been restored, as a first charge, without discussion or argument. The Germans treated Belgium as burglars would treat a safe-deposit if they were fortunate enough to get into it, and they are permitted, by an inexcusable laxity, to merge the swag in an indemnity.

And that is all the comfort which Belgium will receive. For her broken towns, her murdered citizens, her useless factories, the cost of the war—for all these she gets no compensation at all. The Allies, kindly still to the Germans, are content that Belgium shall suffer. They will not even compel the Huns to buy back at their face value the seven milliards and a half of marks which they forced upon the Belgians' acceptance, and which have already depreciated by some two-thirds. No wonder that Belgium is unhappy and depressed. She rose in arms against a robber, and she is asked to pay for the robber's depredations. And we can easily believe that, as a consequence of the Allies' supineness, she will be driven back into the arms of the Germans. Such, indeed, is the opinion of the correspondent already cited. "The only remedy for Belgium" is, he writes, "having failed at the Peace Conference, to submit to the enemy's deliberate war policy. Germany destroyed Belgian industry in order that her victim might be forced to purchase from the German industrial, and to-day Belgium finds that the Allied Powers are forcing her to inevitable acquiescence in the German plan." If this be so, the Allied Powers wear a stain of dishonour that shall never be washed away.

After all, we begin to think that it is the Germans who have won the war. Their country is packed with loot

and plunder. As no battle was fought upon their territory, they have nothing to repair. They will begin the war of commerce without let or hindrance, marvellously enriched by the machinery they have stolen and the models they have copied during the war. In 1871 France was asked to pay three times the amount which Germany had spent in her unprovoked attack upon her neighbour. Now the whole world is busily engaged in estimating how much Germany may pay without impoverishing herself. The claims of justice are forgotten, and we hope that the Great Powers will enjoy the shout of derision which will go up from all corners of the German Empire when it discovers how lightly it has been let off. To-day the Germans whine loudly and profitably about the ruin whereby they are faced. Such is their habit, as we all knew. But they are very rich, not only in the fruit of their industry, but in the treasures which for many years they have been acquiring. The picture-galleries of Germany contain masterpieces of priceless worth, and none of these should be left them. When a reckless citizen is made bankrupt, he is not permitted to keep his library or his picture-gallery. And Germany, which made a long premeditated attempt to turn the whole world to bankruptcy, that she might increase her own store, should be treated like a fraudulent merchant. We know what she would have done with the pictures and statues and books and furniture which she had collected from Belgium and Northern France had victory been hers. Vast museums would have been built in Berlin to hold the stolen treasures. The Germans, systematic even in thieving, attached experts to their armies, and it was the experts' business to steal and catalogue while the fighting went on. M. Louis Marin, in a French parliamentary paper, has made a list of the German thefts, and has explained where the Germans had stored the loot, which they intended to send into the Fatherland. One depot at Brussels contained the costly spoils, gathered in 1917-18, of Lille, Douai, Cambrai, La Fère, and Laon. Neither museums nor private houses were spared. From the princes downward the Huns were accomplished robbers, and they did their work thoroughly. In the Palais de Justice at Brussels were 15,000 cases of books and MSS., collected from Valenciennes, Cambrai, Laon, and the rest, as well as from such private libraries as the Prince of Monaco's. The modern gallery at Brussels contained more than 2000 stolen oil-paintings, and there were large hoards also at Maubeuge, Charleville, Sedan, and Metz. The policy of the marauding Huns, in truth, was unsparing and deliberate. Had they won the war they would have left behind for their enemies not a book, not a painted canvas, not a piece of sculpture. And their

policy should have given us a clue in dictating terms. Since they will not have expiated their sins until they have paid for the damage they have done, the Allies should have stripped Germany of all the works of art which she possesses, and which she is not fit to possess. We might have left her for her enjoyment the works of Menzel, Lenbach, and other native painters, and taken from her the masterpieces of Italy and France and Spain, of Belgium and Holland and England. Here was a simple method of paying a portion of the indemnities which she owes the Allies; here was a simple method of teaching the lesson that they must be punished who make war an excuse for the stealing and defacement of works of art. Such of the pictures as found no homes in the public galleries of the Allies might have been sold at auction for the benefit of the hapless nations, who see no chance of recovering from Germany the money which is their due. This reasonable policy doubtless seemed harsh to our plenipotentiaries, who agree with the Huns in believing that what is sauce for the goose is not sauce for the gander—that the Huns may steal a horse without offence, where a Frenchman or an Englishman or a Belgian may not look over the wall. So the Huns, beaten in war, are likely to triumph in peace, because our sentimental and never disinterested politicians find it both amiable and profitable to protect them from the consequences of their crimes.

Printed by William Blackwood and Sons.